

MODERN AMERICAN
POETRY - 1933

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MODERN AMERICAN
POETRY — 1933

EDITED BY
GERTA AISON



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For
SARA TEASDALE

The unwilling earth said:
Burst out of me. Bud into being,
into colour and light. But come back,
come back even in your own time.

Yes, you knew the earth.
You sang in its pain and glory.
You wandered in quiet ways and saw
autumn tumble down in a living jumble:
red and orange and brown; the sea and the wind
were your harp; all birds your voice.

In quiet ways
you walked, and paused a moment to lift
desolate things into sunlight; a moment to
touch lightly the pain torn body of man; to heal.

Out of far hills
the earth voice moaned:
How long is your living holiday?
So in a night too soon but in your own time,
you went back. The autumn jumble is sere:
earth, reclaiming you, weeps.

Gerta Aison

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HIGHWAY SPRING-LURE

The budding elm holds evanescent shades
Close up against a rain-washed, cobalt sky—
The red-bud smoke is purpling through the glades;
And scents from wild-plum seem to melt and fly
From lone etched trees all clothed in bridal white
Or spread from flowering thickets, miles in length,
Along the ribboned road whose steel-blue light
Is flanked by grass embankments new-green-strength,
And wider selvages of golden clay
Adorn its edge—I see Spring follow hard
On Winter's heel to find a rope or spray
Of scarlet berries clinging, yet, unmarred. . .

Above the new-lit snowy May-haw's blooms
The Sweet-gum branches wave their rose-hued plumes.

BARE TREE IN THE RAIN

Your time of beauty waned this autumn day,
And now, all spent, you face the wind—at bay—
Devoid of coppered gold, and brown and red—
The only thing unkept that nature fed;
Provided even doubly her supply,
Unclothed, and sketched on evening's clouded sky;
An unprotected frame-work, unaware
All winter long that none on earth will care.

The pouring rain seems hard of heart to dim
And turn your silver bark on every limb,
To iron colored, unattractive scales—
(No wonder that the drops have turned to flails
That whip unendingly across your breast,
And you, the queen of nature, cannot rest!)

In vain your fallen leaves surround your feet,
While ceaseless torrents drench and beat.

THE TREE

Monarch of hillside and valley;
King of the landscape, supreme.
Up, up, green boughs ever reaching,
Striving for Heaven, 'twould seem.

Braving the hot suns of summer;
Mocking the winter's defy.
A sentinel staunch and faithful;
Haven of wild things that fly.

Seasons may dawn and may wither—
Time but adds grace to your mold.
Decades are naught in your reck'ning;
Aged—yet you never grow old!

Oh, wonderful work of nature,
Deep-rooted within the sod,
What mortal can view your greatness
And doubt still that there's a God?

VITIATION

We tripped through life together, you and I,
Content to let love guide our vagrant feet.
Youth called to youth, nor did we question why,
For right or wrong, we only knew 'twas sweet.
Above the skies were smiling, cloudless, blue;
Our hearts sang songs, melodious and gay.
What else could matter then, for I had you?
The world serene rolled on its blithesome way.

In dreams I meet that lass you used to be,
And then you own that withered pow'r to thrill.
The fragrance of those days drifts back to me;
The sweetness of your kisses linger still.

Alas, those dreams but mock a love long dead,
For like two stupid, blund'ring fools, we wed!

THE LESSON OF LIFE

Oh captive bound, thy days are dark
And shadows fall across thy way,
Majestic rules the God on high,
Faint not, nor fall, but ever try
Upright to stand.

Oh captive bound, serene of face,
Broad of brow and keen of eye,
Thy soul aloft, learn to try
To face the battle and the din
Of clamors wild and wails of sin.

Oh face it all, thou captive one,
Nor sigh, nor moan
But to The Throne
Raise thine eye
And do and dare.

Learn the lesson set for thee,
Then pure and holy thou shalt be
If thus thy record, work right on,
Impress thy seal of faith upon
Thy life's true work, nor sigh, nor shirk:
God's will be done.

WINTER

Our front yard,
It wears a white frock,
So does every other yard
All around the block.

While from the tip
Of most every tree,
Hang twigs as jewelled
As ever they can be.

Guess Dame Nature
Is servin' tea to-day;
She's dressed so mighty lovely—
Like our neighbors 'cross the way.

NEEDS

We need the sun, the moon and stars
That show the way by day and night.
We need the trees and scented flow'rs
That God has placed within our sight.

We need the rivers that gently flow
Into lakes and seas rough and deep.
We need the rain, the beautiful snow,
Without which, no harvest we'll reap.

We need the hills, and mountains high,
That pierce the clouds with their peaks.
We need the grandeur of the sky
Out of which it is God who speaks.

We need the richness of the soil
To help the growing of earthen sod.
We need the gardens in which to toil,
But most of all, we need our GOD.

PERSONS

Is the person who abstains from sin
The person who is bound to win?
Is the person who commits a crime
The person who shall serve "some time?"

The person who commits a tort,
Shall he be brought into court?
Shall names of disturbers of the peace
Be kept on record by the police?

When a wrong is committed with force,
Does the law take it's proper course?
God bless the person who lends a hand
To uphold the law of this great land.

THE CLOWN'S DEATH

Swung into Eternity on an elephant's trunk!
Dropped into a circumspect heaven with a scatter of
 sawdust
And a smell of horses!
If certain promises hold true—
Oh—your ring is unbounded now, clown;
Hop through the golden hoop of the sun
Ride bareback on the horses of the wind
While the bearded saints eat celestial peanuts
And applaud you!

REQUIEM

The tall young trees of the forest
Do not bury their dead;
But a sound of gentle mourning
Goes always overhead.

And round each ancient fallen trunk
Young trees a circle make
And stand in dark solemnity
In one eternal wake.

BONDAGE

The statues of the city park
Crowd in on you and me.
 (The chalk cliffs of Dover
 Gleam white across the sea)
The city sparrows peck away
At statue eyes that stare.
 (The seagulls of Dover
 Draw circles of swift air)

JUNE

I never see rain drenched fields of grain
Without a pang of longing pain—
Waving softly, new born grain
Turning cool faced blades to the rain.
I'll never know the thrilling feel
Of grubby toes and calloused heel
Splashing in the gutter while the rain beats tune—
To childhood's—June—Oh happy June!

THE WEAVER

Oh beloved;
Like the sirens of the eastern seas,
You have woven a golden thread for me
In the tapestry of life.

In endless chain of thought, memories of you
Are woven in my tapestry, like the blue
In a peaceful sea or sky.

FUTILITY

A menace in the crouching,
Like seared arms of witchery
Akin to hatred of a hag
Whose race is run and stilled
By reality beyond her sorcer's bag—
A crouching tree standing out against the sand
So white and dead, like crushed bleached bones
Of a human head—
Standing there, a mockery to man
Whose little use was never strength enough
To solve the mystery of wastes and stones
And dead life's bones—
Where life itself is dead—
Where restless flesh
Whose scientific mind of learned research
Bends deep in worship—what futility!
Since all life hides in earth's cold church.

THE WIND IS BLOWING FROM THE WEST

The wind is blowing from the west
The seeds or flowers for the spring;
My soul is casting seeds of song
For other souls to sing.

The wind blows likewise seeds of grass
That April has a fault to show;
My soul in casting seeds of song
Casts seeds of grass also.

But one sweet flower warrants well
An acre of the grass and weeds;
One soul's pure song will parallel
A thousand alien seeds.

CONTAGION

Tonight the stars
Look like far lilies needing rain,
Or little sparks of pain
Gnawing the night. . . .
I wonder if earth's sickness can
Spread from a man
And catch a star;
If crime can cross the universe
And leave its scar. . . .
Who knows? It might.

THOUGHTS

Thoughts . . . persistent memories
Of things in the past,
Thoughts . . . consistent longings
For things in the future.
Thoughts! thoughts!
Poisonous mosquitoes of the mind,
Living parasites of the soul,
Whole armies of thoughts
Crowding in to remind you
Of the atom that you are,
Of the ideal you cannot be.

DREAMS

Dreams . . . delicate, tender, frail
Things woven together with the
Fiber of imagination . . .
They hold imprisoned in their
Immortal sphere our ambitions
Ideals and aspirations . . .
At best we only have a
Fleeting glimpse of Life,
So why not let some dreams
Come in?

RED ASHES

A forsaken love
Is like red ashes
Dropped from a burning grate:
The ashes no longer
Burst into flames
But the heat is there . . .
A fire is never dead
While the ashes are still red.

A PENSIVE PILGRIM

I do not seek to tread this path again;
Though priceless were the gifts laid at my feet:
I knew sincere acclaim by fellow-men,
And rapture of young love, so pure, so sweet;
A childhood blessed with kindness was mine—
Ah, this now seems the dream, most fair and strong,
To lure me back to happiness divine
And herald its glad dawn with raptest song.
My senses thrill! Yet with a thought of it
I grasp the fragment left of even-tide:
With memories content, my way is lit;
With dangerous abysses cast aside.
For all too soon life's grim reality
Lashed ceaselessly my toilsome, restless sea.

IT'S WINTER NOW

It's winter now. . . The trees in mourning sigh
Over their sleeping pasture-land. The road
Unwinds its tangled thread of umber dye,
Curling lonesomely by the warming fold.
And the terrible cold is master now.
All day a silken veil of gray is drawn,
In gracious folds, about the troubled brow
Of Nature, and the fickle sun is gone.

It's winter now. . . The day awakens late.
The monarch of the wood is ermine robed.
A cardinal sits on his castled gate
And strums his song. Like dancing girls of old
In dainty gowns, the snow-flowers reel and bow
Over their satin bed of purity.
And the sun pours down his richest gems, now
Adoring . . . destroying . . . earth's sanctity.

THE INITIAL TREE

For fifty years she stood as now,
And never once has told
The secrets that each limb and bough
Could accurately unfold.

The green cape of her foliage
Covers a world of truths
Of happy days, of childhood tears
And ardent loves of youths.

The carving of each hieroglyph,
Each little scratch and mark
Has meaningly attached itself
To scarred old beechwood bark.

The sap that flows inside her trunk
Has taken on in later years
A sweetness due to happiness,
A saltness due to tears.

THE FOG HORN

The thickening fog bedims the lighthouse flare;
The fog horn blares and bellows out "Beware!"
Beware the shallows and the rocks which lie
Fog-ridden, and so hidden that no eye
Can pierce the murk to where the watery swirl
Is all intent, it seems, to rise and hurl
The venturous ship upon the rending reef.
Hoo-oo! hoo-oo! in accents stern and brief,—
 Beware! Beware!
 For death lurks there!

A saurian monster—how the creature blows,
Groaning as in the agonizing throes
Of death,—so to the landsman's listening ear,
But, to the seaman, warning, danger's near!
It is a Voice, translating word to deed,
If but the voyagers will give good heed;—
Hoo-oo! hoo-oo! hoo-oo! the darkness through,
A Monitor who murmurs,—"This means you!"
 Beware! Beware!
 For death lurks there!

In fog and mist, in sleet and driving rain,
A beast in torture, writhing in his pain?
A new Prometheus Bound, as eagles shriek
And gash the victim's heart with claw and beak?
Well, no; it is the Watch, which never sleeps,
But, tirelessly, a constant vigil keeps.
To guard from danger and to guide to shore;
Listen, and hear the fog horn's distant roar—
 Beware! Beware!
 For death lurks there!

Give heed! Give heed!
—And so, God speed!

SECRECIES

The stars have golden secrecies
They may not, cannot tell;
They wink and blink and look so wise!
But guard their secrets well.
The untamed sea holds mysteries
Beneath its surge and swell,
Untold, though the cajoling wind
Is gay as marriage bell.

The dim wood holds forth shadowy hands
And beckons me more near;
And yet, I know her winning voice
I only vaguely hear.
Great Nature seems to veil herself
As woman veils her heart;
We think she tells us everything—
She only tells a part.

TO A MUMMY

Oh thou dark semblance of our human life,
Close-swathed in silent bonds of mystery,
From out the many templed Past thou'st come,
As moving slowly through the locks of time
(Where centuries are closing gates of strength
Enduring against the traveler's return
Except in winged memory or dream).
Thee would we touch with hands of brotherhood,
For thou hast lived and loved and suffered too;
Thy soul once reached forth searching, suppliant hands
Within its shadow-circled consciousness;
Once felt the thrill which comes to man alone
When touching howe'er lightly the Divine,
And knowing himself Divine in some dim way.
With thee we fain would take our onward course,
Twin mysteries of Life and Death awhile,
Till somewhere down the ever changing way
We too shall lie close wrapped and stilled like thee.

NOVEMBER WOODS

The ghost of Summer lurks among the trees.
I hear her quiet footfall on the leaves.
Oh, West Wind that didst love her, sing a dirge;
Sing softly like a sigh from one that grieves.

BEACH WOODS

Like tall, gray monks, you stand at eventide,
Beneath cathedral arches of new green,
Listening while thrushes sing their evensong
As the last glory of the setting sun
Touches your reverent heads with the pale glow
Of altar candles when the day is done.

THE STORM

Across the hills, I hear the hurrying wind
With flying garments, coming with the rain.
Up in the sky, it sounds as if there's war;
And all the fallen angels have come back
To make more trouble in their long lost heaven.
The night is black and sullen till a sharp,
White zig-zag tears and shrieks up through the sky;
And broader flashes light the breathless earth
And show the frightened trees swaying to and fro.
Ah, That terrific crash and blinding flash
Mean that some dear loved tree has been struck down.
. The silence, now, is almost terrible.
. Listen! . . . A rush of rain drops, on the roof!
The storm is here I'll lay me down to sleep.

COME LINGER FOREVER WITH ME

O come, love, where Oregon pine-trees entwined,
Shade trails that wind misty and lone;
Where the music of water-falls sounds in our ears,
And the soft winds sigh faintly and moan.

Where the tangled wild roses that bloom by the sea,
Still smile when the clouds gloom o'er-head,
And rain-drops, like tear-drops, fall for a-while,
Till rainbow to sunshine is wed.

O come, love, to lone Ne-a-ka-nie's white sands,
Where the mad waves crested with foam,
Dash out their turbulent music in songs
To wanderers lonely, who roam

Near the quaint rustic tavern, where dim lantern-glow
Reveals a fireplace and many a nook,
Where we'll sit by the window and watch the wild
 waves,
Or rest by the fire, with a book.

O come, love, to Portland's Rose Garden of Dreams,
Where the faint and elusive perfume,
Floats upward on mists of illusion that veil
The beauty of roses a-bloom.

For, roam where you will, love, the wide world all
 over,
No place of enchantment you'll find,
Save this fair land of roses, whose mystical bowers
Hold the Goddess of Beauty enshrined.

So, love, search no more, for the Dream-land of lovers,
I've found it out here by the sea,
In this Oregon-land where the winged love-god hovers;
Come, linger forever, with me.

MOUNTAINS

High above the fertile plains of earth they rise,
Majestic battlements that sweep eternal skies.
Mountains—shining through the silver mists of rain
Whose fingers draw thin, fragile, gossamer curtains
Across the scenes of earth, green seas, and plains.
Mountains, sleeping giants that lie in rest at eventide,
Or robed in the stardust of a million glowing lights
Where stars reflect themselves in glory at their feet.
Mountains, above whose heads great clouds drift
 slowly by
With white furred sails, like fleets of phantom ships.
High above the fertile plains of earth they rise—
Majestic battlements that sweep eternal skies.

WANDERING WINDS

Down from the hills blow the winds of the world,
Their music, their laughter and chatter are hurled
With swiftness and happiness; gay winds of mirth.
Gray winds that forlornly roam over the earth.
Cold, wandering winds whose chill breath blows
Down over mountain tops high capped with snows.
Gay, wandering winds with which we once raced
Down over the green hills at a maddening pace.
Wild, wandering winds that breathed of romance
'Neath great, white moons on strange foreign strands.
Mad, wandering winds that whispering low,
Tempted you, beckoned you, enticed you so.
Wild, wandering winds that drew you away—
Forever embarking on Adventure's road gay.
Free, wandering winds—roam—roam ever on—
Never can the gray earth imprison your song.

OF BLINDNESS

When eyes have shown me my Gethsemane,
And all the form and color they beheld
Are locked against my silent sesame,
And lesser views are evermore dispelled;
When the black pall that shuts away my sight
Is all too short to cover all of me,
And I have come to know affliction's right
Of seeing strangely more than others see;
When melodies inscribe a hidden score,
And only perfume builds a perfect flower,
And savor teaches nectars lost before,
And one face touched restores my sight's full power;
Then I shall rise a mortal newly blessed,
And walk in radiance only the blind have guessed.

TREE RAIN

Rain comes dripping from a tree
Long after clouds are dry:
Showers on the eyelids here,
There—a prised sky!

Gentle as an angel's tears,
These drops upon my face.
What memory of cruel storms
Could hold against their grace?

Silver leaves will catch the sun
Every raindrop knows,
Clinging there to help a tree
Make a thousand bows.

Let me feel the after-rain
Dripping from a tree—
In my soul a rainbow arch
Flooding all of me!

WHAT IS BEAUTY?

Beauty lies not in what the eye doth see;
In gross, material shape and earthly form;
But rather in that image there will be
A lasting memory so deep and warm,
An ethereal, mystic something that we prize.
The many parts assembled as a whole
But give the first impression. Beauty lies
Deep in imagination and the soul.

MY CREED

I know not what the future holds for me
Of joy and sorrow, laughter, bitter tears,
Of changing fortune, be it good to see,
Or be it worse than any of my fears.

I care not what the years to come will bring
For I can live but just from day to day.
And while I live hosannas I will sing
To Him who leadeth me along life's way.

For He will guide aright my erring feet
If I but follow as He bids me go;
And in that great Tomorrow I will meet
The One who marked my pathway here below.

ORIGINAL YOU

You can't pretend nor make believe;
You would not even try;
You do not care what others think;
You're one who will get by.
For life is short and sweet they say—
There's always something new,
But some folks get more fun than others
And one of them is you.

You may swear a bit, smoke a bit
And sometimes tell a lie;
But there's nothing underneath it all;
No one knows it more than I.
You'll have your joke and even laugh
When other folks only smile,
And it's just your little humorous way
That carries you many a mile.

MY ONLY SIN

I always try to be so good
For life just seems as if we should,
Especially at the country side
Where peace and quietness abide.

The mountain roads with flowers tall,
The beautiful summer, spring, and fall,
The sparrow and its mate chirp high
While robin-red-breast flutters by.

All goodness seems within my soul,
But there's a truth I must unfold:
It's just a little hurt within;
My love for you is my only sin.

TRANQUILLITY

There is an ease of indolence,
Mere drifting on a flowing tide
With nothing to oppress the sense,
All care and striving set aside.

But what of unperturbed repose—
That miracle of peace 'mid stress?
The calm that conquers stubborn foes,
Compels reluctant ill to bless?

The moon shines clear in storm-wracked sky,
While surcharged, riven clouds rush by.

And lo, the Christ on Calvary,
Triumphant in his agony!

STORMS

The rain begins reluctantly—
Like tears that force their way—
But soon becomes a raging power
With winds that slash and flay.
The river leaps beyond its bounds,
A beast, with mouth afoam,
It carries off a dam, a bridge,
Some trees—a treasured home.

So tears may gather like the flood,
A very bitter stream,
And sweep away our plans and hopes,
The joys of which we dream.

But homes of men are built again,
Scarred hearts are healed of pain!

SIMILE

The bare
Black limbs of trees
Against the winter sky
Are like these thoughts of mine, stripped bare
Of hope.

PARADOX

Your love
Has been to me
The exquisite blending
Of all things offered in Heaven
And Hell.

THE OUTER PALE

You do not know the world I wander in,
The motley throng of which I am a part,
You would condemn the things I sometimes do,
Because I must appease my restless heart.

I cannot live within your narrow world,
Though I forego your safety, flirt with grief,
I must forever venture just beyond—
Where restless souls like I may find relief.

THERE WAS A NIGHT

There was a night of moon-shot mist,
There was a song unsung,
There was a moment when we kissed,
When our hands met and clung.

There was the promise of a star,
Bright hope of ecstasy,
But I am I, and you are you,
And some things cannot be.

THE WANDERING BARD
(*On the death of Vachel Lindsay*)

Voice of the screaming, virile West,
Now stilled, for the muted silence of death
Doth rule his infinite eternal rest,
And with bowed heads we mourn his dying breath.

Freedom's wings his shadow shield,
He saw it all, and, seeing, put it into verse;
Life as it is his pen did wield;
He put its subtle harmony in rhythm terse.

So hail to Lindsay, "singing bard,"
The first who in verse our own freedom expressed;
The key of a nation, struggling hard,
He held, who today 'neath the sod is at rest.

His soul has flown to distant lands,
But his poetry lingers beyond race and world;
Let us revere as his passing demands,
Yet rejoice that this nation one poet unfurled.

THE CRITIC

Within the shadow of a lowering sun,
Behind, the day, its rapid course now run—
I stand, one tiny thought in embryo,
A feeble note in God's fortissimo.
Cast in the mold of men to mortal law,
Seeking to find in fellowmen a flaw.

HOME

I want a home in the hills
Where summer winds among roses blow,
Inspiring the birds to carnivals of song.
Where autumn comes rich in colors bold
Painting the trees, orange, red and gold.
Where winter lingers with whistling winds
And covers the earth with a white mantle.
Where spring appears in garb of green,
Rejoicing my soul, with the renewal of life.

WERE I

Were I an artist with a magic touch
I'd paint the sky in colors such
As only the mellow autumn can show,
In it's setting sun's rose-golden glow.

Were I a singer of notes so sweet
That with the thrush I could compete
I'd trill and sing in a thicket green,
Where trodden paths may not be seen.

Were I a poet with a golden pen
I'd dream on a hill-top, and when
The new crescent moon rules the blue sky,
My dreams would live—never to die.

Artist, singer, poet—no, not I,
Just one of the throng passing by.
Thanking my Master that I can be,
Close to the wonders, He created for me.

WEAK

You were like a light-twigged shrub
Covered with beautiful airy blossoms
That showered down
If one but coughed beside it—
Leaving it an empty thing. . . .

SONATA PATHETIQUE

Prelude:

Spring crying: "Dream!"
With a voice of brass
Bringing its shrilling
Close about my ears
Pleading wildly that we
Walk together—
You and I—remember—
Hand touching—
Eyes searching—
Lost one within the other—
Remember——?

Spring crying—
Ashes to ashes
Dust to dust
Love was pure gold
But now it is rust.
Oh spring is weeping
Tears of blood
That mixes with my sorrow
As rain with mud.
Spring is calling
I cannot heed her cry
My mind is full of death songs
Luring me to die—.

YOUTH

I know in deepening twilight, when the sweet
First breath of Spring is magic on my brow
As eager March and answering April meet,
I know beyond all doubt or question how
This love will hold me, heedless of the flight
Of years that challenge lesser love with scorn;
I know in quiet intervals of night,
When through the fog the steamship's brooding horn
Remotely seeks a pathway into space,
I know as I know now, pierced by the sound
Of storm-clouds clashing in their maddened race
To shatter splendor on the arid ground.
Through time transfixed, or ages that will go
Their way forever, oh I know, I know!

RAIN

How swiftly, virile spirit, you unfurl
The shimmering mantle that the clouds encase,
And from their clasp impetuously hurl
Your swirling veil before the sun's hot face!
Emboldened now, through brimming skies you fling
Your heart upon the earth, from that domain
Whence ardently to listening fields you sing
Crescendo measures of your glad refrain.

Thus would I, from the fount within a heart
That thirsts for lofty hill and flowered plain,
Through songs invoke the torrent's counterpart
In words as irresistible as rain,
So glorifying all they touched upon
That Nature thereby might be wooed and won.

TRANSMIGRATION

The rising moon was a thin glass marble
That rolled its light on the floor.
Through the kitchen door,
You talked to me—when you were four
And remembered then
The things that we forget when we are men.
“I am a child of the moon,” you said to me,
And laughed and hummed a little tune.
I might have known.
You watched the fire awhile,
Then with a wise nod turned,
“Child of the moon,” you said again
And placed an elfin hand upon each knee—
More crystal still the moon then shone
To verify your words to me.

WET TWILIGHT

After the rain, within the wood
Dark and wet the tall pines stood;
Banked in the dusk the pines lost form
After a sudden April storm.

Out of their tombs, dead spirits burst
Soothing a hot and stifling thirst;
From their grave-bound feet the thick dust fell,
Seared lips were cooled—souls crept from hell!

After the rain, the woods lay still;
New night blew homeward over the hill;
Freed souls hung white in the pine-thick gloom
Where an hour before grew dogwood bloom.

NOVEMBER

Where the heron nests by the river's rim
 'Mid dead brown leaves and mold,
The slender trees stand stark and bare
 Stripped of their Autumn gold.

A brooding silence over all,
 A sullen, ominous light
From low, gray clouds that idly drift
 As swallows in their flight.

Over the dunes the lowering mists
 White as a veil of dream
Softly lie on the fading hills
 Lost in twilight's gleam.

The moaning sea with ceaseless sigh
 Breaks 'gainst the ledges near
Echoing deep a requiem
 Sung for the dying year.

THE SLEEPING CITY

The city sleeps! and I, alone, keep watch.
So still and tranquil is the hour, I almost hear
The heart-throbs of the sleepers as they dream,
For lost in night's oblivion all seems
Enwrapt in its deep silences.
I look above, and there a waning moon, a crescent
 gleam
Swings low to touch the pale earth's rim
So vaguely seen, so weirdly dim—
It lights with its ethereal glow
The deep, dark distances below.
Now flooding all with a celestial fire
And crowning with a star cathedral spire;
Spreads mid the gloom of quiet streets its ray,
Where flickering tapers burn the hours away.

LIFE

If I can stop one heart from aching;
If I can ease one heart from pain;
If I can cease one heart from sighing,
Then I will not have lived in vain.

If I can smile when all about
My friends let grief in their hearts reign;
If I can sing midst pain and doubt,
Then I will not have lived in vain.

If I can help the grasses grow,
And let them ease my heart from pain;
If I will seed and flower sow,
Then I will not have lived in vain.

ARTIST

The world is sad and beautiful.
An old tree moans, and sobs with leaves.
In hooded cloak, gray fog creeps down.
On weary feet night climbs the hill.

My music, too, is beautiful:
Sweet dreams fall sadly, like the leaves.
I smile; and gild each somber sound
With the gold-dust of my trill.

I WISH NOT LIFE TO COME IN SUNS OF FLAME

I wish not life to come in suns of flame.
Give me, instead, the twilight and its peace.
I want the joy that comes from little things:
A hermit-thrush, an old familiar field,
A friendly chat, a bowl of curd at dusk.
I want the thrill of unforgotten tunes,
That bring me pictures at the close of day.
Give me a meadow for my summer tour,
And may old letters be my pleasure-books.
And God—
If I shall climb—oh, not a starry stair—
For stars seem cold and very far away!
If I shall sing, oh, may some tired heart
Find comfort in the sweetness of my song!
And may my life be ever as today,
When leaves like pale green, paper saucers smile,
And quiver with the wind as does my heart;
When life is but a trembling, throbbing tree,
And beauty seems too dear for me to touch.

HOUSE WRECKERS

Horny hands, steel, and the great cranes
Have pulled down hope and fear
And longings
Stone by stone;

Have torn the beams,
So thoroughly permeated with doubt,
So dried with golden dreams,
So hardened with hate and ambition.

And all the mortar
Fell through the wrecking
Like little cries at a homecoming,
Like little sweet moans in the darkness;
Or sharply jangled and scraped
Like the last bubble-break of the death rattle.

They have pried the joists,
Loosing sobs
And the muttering of old curses
And the cruel agonized shriek of childbirth.

They have shattered into bits
The last poor echo of passion.
The last shadow has been broken on the rack;
The last kiss lost in a hammer blow.

You who wreck houses,
Do you know what it is you are handling?

NAMELESS

How may I name a thing no man has named
Or hope to capture what was never caught?
How seek with words to net an unborn thought
Upon a leash lead beauty all untamed?
As well to hope that butterflies unmaimed
Will soar from childish hands, or all untaught
Rodin and Michaelangelo have wrought
The marble men for which they're rightly famed.

No matter then how zealously I write,
What words I use to trim and shape my rhyme,
How dare I hope that any man will see
The moon-green garden where I meet delight?
For how can one who works with tools of time
Fashion a cup to hold infinity?

GOD'S SCARE-CROW

God is a farmer
who sets up the scare-crow death
before the gates of his heavenly garden
lest some mortal,
finding the fruits of this world too knobby and sour,
rush in and help himself to the angel's apples——
but occasionally some wise soul,
knowing death for what he is,
God's scare-crow,
takes his life in his hands
and pushing past death negligently
opens the gate
and shouldering aside the astonished angels
helps himself to the reddest apple——

I LOVE YOU BEST AT EVEN

I love you best at even,
When twilight calls the dew
From out the deeps of star space
To rest, sweetheart, on you,
And bless you with its meaning
Of purity divine.
Its message love will sweeten
Adown the years of time.

I love you best at even
When songbirds seek their nest,
And childhood softly slumbers
Pressed close to mother's breast.
My heart then stirs with longing,
My soul flies out to you,
When twilight falls at even
And love comes with the dew.

IN YOUR EYES THE SUNSHINE LIES

Why do flowers with perfume rare
Twine their fragrance in your hair,
Why do roses bloom for you,
Why the silver of the dew?
Friendly moon once told to me,
Whispering the mystery,
Secret of the smiling skies:
In your eyes, the sunshine lies.

In their crystal depths I see
Fathomless infinity
Glowing with sweet passion's fire
Love-lit from the heart's desire;
Lilting songs of Love's glad day,
Bud and blossom of fair May
Chime with Spring's crooned lullabies,
In your eyes the sunshine lies.

GARDEN CITY SWEET MILL

Giant claw-teeth
Hooking, chewing
Slick-backed sugar beets;
Forcing them down
Terrible tin throats
Into murky, weedy, wash-water.
Monstrous hack-saws
Ripping, slicing
Wet, white sugar-flesh.
Huge, flat whale-jaws
Grinding their shredded bodies
Into a munched, mutilated mass.
Mammoth hell-pots,
Seething, steaming,
Making of shredded sugar-flesh
Lifeless, limpid liquid.
Maddening fly-wheels,
Dizzily turning,
Pressing crystal sugar-drops
Through copper screenings.
Inexhaustible blowers,
Puffing, panting,
Lifting clinging moisture
Into smelly, sugar-air.
Gullible gunny-sacks,
Open-mouthed, begging,
Swallowing fine white sugar-grains;
Satisfyingly submitting
To slovenly sewing.
Bony tug-carts,
Groaning, wailing,
Carrying dead white sugar-dust
Into the dark necropolis.

QUIESCENCY

How still it is . . .
As if the wind had died
Bequeathing hymn and lullaby
To ebbing tide.

This quietude
Is beautiful to own;
Our lips shall breathe a chastened song
In monotone.

No leaf or bud
Dare stir . . . for God decreed
One priceless hour of solitude
To meet our need.

IN A CHINESE GARDEN

There is a garden I can not forget
And frequently I seek its teak-wood gate;
The silent dawns are spiced with mignonette

And almond trees bend humbly with the weight
Of petals lovely as a melody,
Born of a mood both gay and desolate.

Its ancient temple bells have called to me . . .
Invisible as wind my willing feet
Have walked with mandarins in secrecy

And I have found the strange communion sweet.
While prayers were mingled with the lotus-scent
A hunger in my heart was made replete.
Why should a day be warped with discontent
When dreams may bear me to the Orient?

LONELY FURROWS

I must follow my lonely furrow
And you must follow yours,
Tragic the pain that they should be
So near and yet so far apart;
That you should never understand
Nor hear the cry of my eager heart.
While I must look with longing eyes
Where the far line meets the blue,
Knowing our paths will never merge,
That my dream will never come true,
But each in his separate furrow
Must follow the plow alone.

HIS HANDS

His hands so big and strong
Lay like young rosebuds
In the hollows of mine own
Not many years ago,
Their very helplessness a power
To take one's breath away;
Their dimpled fragrance a sharpness
Stinging my eyes to tears of joy.
Now have they grown to muscle strength,
Browned in the sun, eager and vibrant,
Their manliness fair won.
Oh, may they keep that force and beauty
Free from the plunderings of a careless world,
A world whose grasp too oft forgets
The charm of chivalry and duty,
Leaving truth's banner in the dust unfurled;
To bear at last but haunting memories of pain.
But his dear hands are strong and pure,
And in their gentleness and strength
My heart may rest secure.

THE FOG SEA

Busy with hurrying to and fro,
Loud with the din of the clattering street,
Lay the great city down below
In the valley under my feet.

But over the city deep and white
A mist like the sea was spread,
Whose billows rolled in the morning light
And broke on a shore o'er the city's head.

Out of the east the brightening sun
Looked over the mountain crest,
And the waves of the fog sea fast did run
To the shore where they might rest.

And the mist-surf broke on a wond'rous strand
At the foot of a mountain old
That stands like a sentinel over the land
In the midst of the snow and cold.

But the sun's bright beams soon scattered the mist,
And the sea soon melted away,
While the city's towers all sun-kissed
Pierced through to the light of day.

FOG IN THE SUN
(*Impressions of San Francisco*)

Bright heights
Stagger hills
Hurry canyons
Busy beauty style clean
Cosmopolitan Self
The City

Light fog pink light
Illusive towers
Seagulls circle float
Bay is grey

Balconies escapes
Oriental curves angles
Chatter tongues
Shuffle odours
Laundry
Dark shops jewels
Markets strange
Foods silks China

Wharfs and boats
Shore-line
Pier-battlemented
Ships heads guns
Defense

Rumble rumble
Dragon roars
Pour out people
Stream destruction
Make way
Crowded ferry

AN EVENING SONG

The fading sunset marks the close of day.
Each dash of color, fading, faintly calls
For all who toil to cast dull care away
From fretted brow while twilight gently falls.

The dying light mounts up with flaming glow
As wooded hills their evening vigils keep;
The waning light ebbs out with measured flow,
And dies in peace as love and beauty sleep.

The ling'ring light still holds the western sky
While grieving Nature sheds her tears of dew;
In death the sun has flung his colors high
And graced his death in ever-changing hue.

In stately calm he meets the twilight hour,
Seeks not in dread the dark abyss to shun,
But he in darkness yields to that great power
Which changes night from dark to morning sun.

DESIRE

Floods of desire come welling and surging in
Against the rocks of fate on the shores of time;
Heroic, they challenge the hold of the shore
And baffled, turn back to charge it once more.
The hopes of youth mount the crest of the tide,
Laughing and dancing as forward they ride,
Till dashed by the rocks into maddening spray
They're beaten and broken and wafted away.

AT SUNDOWN

The negroes are returning
With their baskets and their mule teams.
They are bringing home the cotton
For the long day's work is done.
Through the old abandoned rice fields
You can see their wagons winding
Where the feathery plumes of wild rice
Wave and glitter in the sun.

In the pools of shadowed water
Grow the lotus and the lily.
There are gleaming red-bronze mud-flats
Where white herons nest and fly,
And the blossoms of the wampee
Are reflected in the shallows,
The blossoms of the wampee
That are bluer than the sky.

Now the eerie twilight settles
In a white fog creeping inland,
And you hear the harness rattle
As the wagons go their way,
And the singing of the negroes
Floating back with haunting sweetness;
Then the silence falls as gently
As the daylight fades away.

SHANGHAIED

She talks unceasingly, until
I ship with her against my will,
To sail the pebbly shallows of her mind;
Though there are deeper channels I could find,
I am her sullen captive still.

THE VAGABOND TRAIL

When I'm weary of life in the cities
And the walls of my home seem a jail,
I yield to the call of adventure
And follow the vagabond trail.

I wander to far distant places
Just a vagabond gypsy am I,
My home in the wide open spaces
My bed 'neath a warm friendly sky.

As I sit in the glow of my campfire
Under the moon's silvery beams,
I'm healthy and carefree and happy
Alone with my pipe and my dreams.

I may never find honor or riches
And in many a duty may fail,
But I find a sweet peace and contentment
As I travel the vagabond trail.

MY IDEAL

I dream of a girl who is lovely
With honest blue eyes and soft hair,
Lips that were meant for caresses,
A face so bewitchingly fair.

I dream of a voice that is music
A smile that is tender—divine,
Cheeks with the soft blush of roses,
A soul that is loyal and fine.

I dream of white hands that are gentle
Small fingers my heart strings entwine;
No other can ever quite equal
This sweet little dream girl of mine.

IN THE KIABAB FOREST

I have heard the hushing of spring winds
in a forest of budding white birches,
and the song of the red start at mating time.

I have seen the topaz-fire of full sun
upon royal palms and red-flowered coral trees
waiting . . . waiting in the stark silence.

And lindens standing afar, stiff and motionless
seeming forged out of dark green metal
save for the scent of wet leaves
softly drifting by.

In the Kiabab Forest

I know how the yellow pine aches to meet the sky
and the groves of aspen quiver in the sudden winds
and the deer wade knee-deep in lupin and fern and
columbine.

In the Kiabab Forest

I am bowed with the beauty
of the silver-boled aspen marching up the mountainside
while my soul marches with them
and longs with the yellow pine
to reach the sky and beyond

CHOUCOON (HAITIAN LOVE SONG)

Behind a big cactus bush
One day I met Choucoon,
She smiled when she saw me.

I say Lord! What a pretty girl.
I say Lord! What a pretty girl.
I say Lord! What a pretty girl.

She said: "Do you think so, dear?"

In the brush the little birds were singing gaily.
But since that day when I think about it,
My heart is in sorrow,
My two feet are in chains.

A BASKET OF SONGS

I've a basket of songs from the marsh of the moon to
sell.

Though I burnt my soul to get them, they're not dear,
For my only price is a laugh like a porcelain bell.

I saw a star that preened itself in a well,
And I knew the pathway studded with light was near.
(I've a basket of songs from the marsh of the moon
to sell.)

I teased the point of a star but it would not tell
So I whispered a secret into its listening ear,
And my only price was a laugh like a porcelain bell.

Then I put on a mask, like the sound of a funeral knell
And the starbeams hid behind the moon in fear.
(I wanted the songs from the marsh of the moon to
sell.)

Then I coaxed the stars and asked why they would not
tell,

And I solemnly let fall a hypocritical tear;
My price will be only a laugh like a porcelain bell.

Till one relented and told what I wished to hear.
They lay in the muck of the well, so falsely clear.
I've a basket of songs from the marsh of the moon to
sell

And my only price is a laugh like a porcelain bell.

RUT HOUSE

Blackened, hardened, side house,
With your empty, leering face,
Grinning with your toothless, barren lips,
You are old, old in your youth.
The snow lies in furrows on your crest
And soothes you gently, slushingly.
You are a silvery haired old man
With a yellowed, sodden face.

LOVE LIKE SOME FAIR ENCHANTED LAND

Love like some fair enchanted land
Retains its mystic power and
'Tis better not to understand.

THE MARNE

At night I stood beside the river Marne
And wondered there upon that lonely shore,
If it too longed for those brave men who'd gone
To battle and had died there, long before.

I wondered if the blood of hearts so brave,
The blood which flowed so freely on that shore,
Did purify the souls of those who gave
And bring them welcome peace forevermore.

I wondered if the river Marne still heard
The guns, the marching feet, the cannon's roar,
The whistle of a bomb so like a bird,
The soldier's songs, which are a part of war.

This thought into my troubled heart came then:
I wondered if the mournful river grieved
For all the dead, or only for those men
Whose country later victory achieved.

And then I saw before me slowly rise
White mists that while I watched became transformed.
They seemed like soldiers marching toward the skies
And not a single one was uniformed.

My puzzled, indecisive mood was gone.
I thought I heard a far off bugle call,
And knew the swiftly flowing river Marne
Did grieve not for a chosen few, but all.

A THOUGHT

"Are you afraid of the darkness, little chap?"
In a pretended shocked voice, queried I:
"Oh no," he bravely said, slipping from my lap,
But there was a frightened look in his eye.

Then I recalled my young fear of unlit gloom,
And I became possessed of a kind whim.
Before he mounted the stairs to his small room,
I went up, and turned on the light for him.

APRIL RAIN

Suddenly born; as swiftly dead, April showers;
Pattering wistfully on my lonely roof;
Do you think, when you fall, only of the flowers?
Or are you sad because I am so aloof?

Each year, do I swear my undying love for you,
As you serenade me with your tearful song;
Bright, silver-clad; petulantly do you woo;
But patience—we shall be together ere long—

Will come an April, when I shall be of the earth—
Then, will you to me your sweet sustenance bring,
And we shall wed, with the ground as our marriage
 berth
While the May flowers will be our loved offspring.

SPRING THOUGHT

Budding trees, reawakening from your winter's sleep!
Bright sunlight your resplendent, blossoming glory
 does steep!

Happy birds herald your rebirth as they gaily sing!
All is joyously, freshly green, for already again 'tis
 Spring.

You are like me, O mighty tree, from a small seed
 sprung,

I, too, am in the Springtime of life; I am young, young.

MY FRIEND

Your friendship makes me the equal of kings.
I love you well and for so many things—
No indulging in righteous temper,
No silly talk of "amici semper"—
No pretences and no jealousies,
No trite or humble endeavor to please,
No asking, no taking—a great deal of giving—
A comrade you are, in the joy of living.
I found you a sharer in all that I'd do
And that's why, dear, I married you.

STARDUST

Stardust is the stuff of dreams,
Of all that is not what it seems,
A phantom joy, a sweet illusion,
A vague and roseate confusion,
A few glimmering grains of light
Falling from a small star bright
For you alone, or so it seems.
Stardust is the stuff of dreams.

FREEDOM

I greet each day with head held high
Arousing envy as I pass by.
Men stop to sigh and stare at me,
Saying, "There goes one who's free!"
And free I am to live as I choose,
To take all chances with nothing to lose.
I go where I will and I laugh as I go—
I laugh to think that men envy me so.
For at night, all alone, where no one sees
My constant prayer is; "Dear God, please,
Let someone have such need of me
That I shall never, as long as I live, be free."

MY WISH

I would possess a little house
That I have seen;
And—yes,—repair it; for it
Has lost its sheen.

I would make more windows,
That it might see
God's beauty all around
In sky and bird and tree.
I would make more doors
To open wide,
That the bright sun's glow
Could steal inside.

I would paint it richly
In colors bright,
To cheer its lonely soul
And give delight;
It is so bleak and lonely now
Without a smile—

I fain would make it mine,
To cheer awhile;
I'd plant a hedge of laughter
All about its walls;
And just a row of glistening tears,
For constant laughter palls;
And a tree of understanding
It would have;
And every day a shower of love,
To make it brave.

This little house—Oh, can't you guess?
It is your heart I would possess!

WHOLE EXISTENCE

You said you were disappointed in me,
But I at the time did not care;
Smiling, I turned to go and said:
"Kind of you to wreck the snare!"

We parted just a short while ago,
And with many others I tarried—
Thinking in such wise to forget;
But God! how my plans miscarried.

'A fool there was . . .' but one penitent,
Whose eyes are now opened wide,
Asking the greatest boon of all:
To stay forever at your side.

RESUME

I could have done
So many things
With just a little time. . .
It could not wait.

I could have seen
So many places
While in my prime. . .
Gone is that state.

I could have been
Without these sighs
And lived a life sublime. . .
Useless to prate.

TRAIN IN THE NIGHT

They cannot tell me, O man-made thing,
Puffing your way alike through darkness and day,
Impervious to wind and rain,
Strong in your strength,
Great in your grandeur,
That you have no life, no thoughts, and no comprehension
Do not rejoice in your victory over the elements.

I have heard your long, weird cry of triumph
When you have traversed, undaunted,
The hazardous journey they set for you.
I have heard you challenge the night,
And the darkness as black as yourself;
Dare them to frighten you
Who ventured so boldly,
Dare them to silence you, dare them to hold;
And they cannot tell me, O man-made thing,
That you have no soul.

SKY DUST

Have you seen the snow falling at night,
A thick, black night when there was no wind,
Falling, layer on layer, through the darkness?

Often you must have found black stones with patches
of mica in them.
I think the sky is like that—a great vault of blue stone,
Dotted with patches of silver—the legion of stars.

Maybe God wants the silver for something in Heaven
And he's cutting away the stone.

How careless of him to let the dust of it fall on the
earth!

COUNTRY GARDENS (PERCY GRAINGER)

Here is a lightsome melody that brings
A haunting glimpse of a sweet dream, long dead,
To agitate love's bright and limpid springs
With all the fragrance that young romance shed.
The pale verbenas clustered near the wall
Consort with pansies, thyme, and feverfew,
The amorous roses, loveliest of all
Bloom regally, hard by an ancient yew.

With rosemary, the morning glories twine
In happy unconcern; sweet mignonette
Is foil for heliotrope; the ivy vine
Has compromised the lowly "bouncing-bet".
Quaint modulations stress a gentle theme
Where all the old-world flowers nod and dream.

WINTER IN THE HILLS

It is a lingering season, from the time
The first reluctant snowflakes idly fall
Upon a chilling earth, until the call
Of wild geese marks the sun's northerly climb;
Familiar fields assume an empty stare,
The range looms vaguely through the drifting snow
That lies, wind-sculptured, row on serried row,
As if all Springs lay whitely buried there.

Throughout the briefened days, the cold comes down
From that eternal stronghold on the heights,
Binding the blue-black river as it wills
Beneath the frosty pines; the sunset's crown
Is not more splendid than the crystal nights
Of the long winter season in the hills.

A PLENTY FAR WOOD

Ef I had money I'd not git,
Fine fixin's or a passle clo'es with hit;
Wood I'd have cut an' stacked so high,
Hit would be mighty nigh ter blue o' sky.
Yer want ter know why I'd do this?
Well folks, fer sartin I'd be full o' bliss,
Jest knowin' fetched thar at the door,
I had a plenty far wood five year more.

The wood-lan's out a little ways,
A plenty far wood thar ter do our days;
Hit tuckers me out jest like sin,
Ter try ter git the wood from thar fetched in.
The fall days come an' fall days they go,
An' winter hits here, thar's the ice an' snow;
Ole man says, "Tildy I'll go soon."
Hit's allers everlastin' same ole tune.

A freezin' cold an' snow so deep,
I'm worried so o' nights I jest can't sleep;
The far wood's gone, the last lone stick,
A-sittin' thar am I rale down right sick.
At last he goes an' gits the wood,
Awhile a plenty have we, like folks should;
The weather's fine, no snow, no ice,
I beg him go fer more wood now hits nice.

Wait allers ontill hits so bad,
He's thar a-sayin' then, "I wish I had"
The same week in, the same week out,
Fer me a big cross haint a bit o' doubt,
I'd riches like fer what I yearn,
A plenty far wood allers here ter burn;
For hit I'd daily hard han's send,
A plenty far wood have o' hit, no end.

MORNING

When creep the dawn's first rosy glows
Upon the purple shadows of the hills,
The slow-revealing gleams disclose
Unfolding glories; then my heart, so eager, thrills
As clouds roll out of lower rift
And swathe in somber tatters
The naked crags, and drift
Above the darkly wooded slopes of firs:
They smoke in stormy trails
Across the upper snows, and hide
The tow'ring summit which impales
The masses grey and black that ride
In triumph, till their wasting edge,
So vainly striving 'gainst the beat of day,
Retreat from peak and rocky ledge,
And into nothingness dissolve away.
'Tis then the newly-wakened bird
Is heard in song both far and near,
And quiet leaves in motion stirred,
For morning comes apace—*no! morning's here!*

QUAKING ASPEN

O stately groves, with silvered trunks,
And restless glimmering of leaves;
Your quiv'ring leaves are never still,
But move to every fitful breeze.
You shade the twisting trail,
And grassy plots be-starred with flowers;
Your aspect changes with the shifting light
Of all the passing hours
You are the youthful friends
Of rugged pines, so gaunt and old,
And changing seasons take your tints of green
And make them beacons bright aflame with gold.

BETRAYAL
To A. L. O.

Our friendship was as beautiful and calm
As midnight star-shine on a desert palm;
But when you sought to steal his love from me,
The bonds splintered like wreckage out at sea.
Noon-day sun on the palm coated with dust
Resembles closely friendship gone to rust.

NIGHT THOUGHT

Dawn will steal into our quiet garden,
Rustling silken iris panels,
Parting the fairy lace of drooping lilacs,
And caressing the plush of larkspur.
When Dawn rings the bluebells in our garden,
You will have gone far over that indigo ridge,
And for remembrance, I shall hold only
A cluster of wisteria dripping with the silver
Of last night's honey-colored moon.

MORNING SONG
To K. M. C.

Today is a long silver mirror,
A reflected chain of jewelled stars.
Today is the ghost of other days—
The memory of sobbing bells
Over low dreamy roofs at dawn.
Today is the shadow of endless days
Laced with panels of slow grey rain.
Today revolves like a shining sphere,
Bathing our world with haunting perfume
Of dew-drenched April violets.
Today is only a prophet of night—
Drifting darkness and blue-white moonlight.

YOU SMILED AT ME

Days were dark, and skies were gray,
Happiness had slipped away,
Life was dragging, drearily—
Then you came, and smiled at me.

Now I sing a happy song;
Life skips joyfully along,
My days all ring with melody—
Because you came, and smiled at me.

You brought a smile, made life worth while,
And dried my every tear.
You've flung behind my worried mind,
And in its place, your loving face
Looks into mine, and whispers, "Dear."

YOUR LOVE FOR ME

Heav'n was dark above,
Shone no ray of light—
'Til your love for me
Illumined the night;
'Til your tender smile
Shone on my sadness;
Making life worth while—
Full of gladness.

O smile on me!
My joyful moment lies
In that dear tenderness
That trembles in your eyes.
Life's only comfort
While this world I see
Is my love for you—
And your love for me.

PROUD EXIT

When I shall die let me not drop a prey
To fearsome skulker, old decay;
Prevent my limbs from slinking to the ground
In mesh of palsy slyly bound;
Proclaim my going with no sullen bell
Sonorous, numbering a knell;
Lover, mourn not for me in weeping greys.

But rather bid me halt my little stay,
As autumn leaves that wanton slay
Their brief existence in a madding round
Of color. In a splendid mound
They fling themselves; that bright, enraptured spell
In sibilance no griefs retell.

Let me go down in such a scarlet blaze!

FALL FLIGHT

Always it is November when she leaves her natal town
(Hurrying, scurrying over the rustling leaves);
We often ask her why it is each fall she likes to go;
She says she has the wanderlust, and yet her eyes cry,
"No."

Every brown, bleak autumn she puts on her Sunday
gown
(Lingering, fingering among the whispering leaves),
And goes away to warmer climes where leaves can
never fall,
And where she chances not to pass an old brown house
at all.

Again this year she started off when leaves came tumbling
down
(Harrying, burying, ever the secret leaves);
Three mounds she left upon the slope under the hemlock
trees;
Is it the mounds that send her forth, mounds and
memories?

WHERE THE WHIPPOORWILL SINGS

There's a cabin in the valley
Where the whippoorwill sings,
And I'm often longing for it
And the happiness it brings;
A strange and mystic happiness
Where the whippoorwill sings.

There's a lake beside the cabin
Where the whippoorwill sings,
And the moonlight on the water
To my memory ever clings;
Ever clings in ceaseless splendor
Where the whippoorwill sings.

There are trees close by the cabin
Where the whippoorwill sings,
And their graceful branches hanging
Make a canopy for kings;
A cool and shady canopy
Where the whippoorwill sings.

There is peace within that cabin
Where the whippoorwill sings,
And from its cozy fireside
A gay welcome always rings;
Rings for friend or stranger
Where the whippoorwill sings.

DEAD DREAMS

I have dreamed dreams
And watched them die,
And laid them tenderly away,
When you passed by.
Shards of my soul
I placed upon the bier,
And when you pass this way again,
You'll know my dreams lie here.

DAYBREAK

The pale white moon,
Slipped silently away,
And dawn came silver robed
To meet the day.

The sun rose in splendor,
After a nights repose,
And drank the dew that morning
Left upon the rose.

COUNTING

When you are gone I count the hours,
As God counts the sleeping flowers.

Night comes again and then I say,
That's one day less he'll be away.

But the days pass so slow so slow,
It seems that they will never go.

And I wonder when you're not here,
If you are counting too, my dear.

WIND UNDER WINGS

Two gulls ride the wind upward over the cliff
And hang balancing on steady wings.
The sea breaks upon the split granite beneath them
And withdraws, leaving the sea-weed dripping,
And suddenly surges in again, lifting the sea-weed
And pouring over the rocks, booming in hollow places.
High, with the fog above them, the white gulls balance,
And the wind whistles as it is let through their wings.
Then suddenly they tilt, and scud back,
Sweeping over the cypress trees swiftly; and check;
And ride up into the wind again, slowly,
On still wings, balancing, forward, forward.
High above the cliff again they break,
And curve back over the cypress trees
And over the far cliff, and are gone.
God! that is glorious motion,
Gulls playing with wind!

LAKE TAHOE

There is no way we breathless infinitesimals may know
What being of most beautiful propensity
Meditating stooped
And with hands of slow, rude immensity
Heavily scooped
This timeless, silent well
Between the blades of granite thrust through snow,
And breaking inter-stellar density
Let in the endless, cold, blue flow.

LIFE AND DEATH

An irate sea beat upon a helpless shore.
A dying child's cry pierced the night.
A farmer's lad went about his chore.
And darkness changed into light.

SLEEP

My thoughts, composed of queerly
Woven fabric, stretch out upon a
Sea of impulses, Some vague, others clear;
And all merely a plaything
Of my subconscious mind.

FOR MYSELF

Mark me down as one of those,
Who ever sought to find repose
In a creed, outworn in barbaric days.
Yet one that flays
Conventions vain, relentless ways.

TO GOD

I have no plea
To make to thee,
Although my life is done.
Life to me has been free of prayer;
And a very unhappy one.

REMNANTS

Well go on, now I am dead.
All men are free to say what they will;
I care not so long as my head
Is pillowed on the earth's cool breast,
And Byron's fever ridden brow
Looms before my eyes,
While Keats extends a helping hand,
And others grouped around
Seem at last to understand.

THE POET

She stands among her sisters like a hill,
With other hills, all sloping, green and fair.
Like them she spreads the daisies at her feet,
And tangles clover sweetness through her hair.
But in her heart alone a spring is hid
With voice that murmurs when the shadows rest,
And once the stars slipped hooded from the sky
And slept among the grasses on her breast.

THE GHOUL

The night wind hurls at the shutters,
Lashes the tree,
Trumpets his call where the marshland
Slumps to the sea,
Whirling in comber-mad dances,
Vikingly free.

The flame of me surges to greet him,
Swept by the plea
That breaks with the passion of being,
Breathlessly.
I fly to the snow-rimmed window
Only to see
The skull of the white moon shaken
Ghoulishly.

ESTRANGEMENT

I must not grieve for you, though I have gone
Too far to touch your hands or to embrace
With love again the look upon your face.

I must not grieve, but sing, for I have known
Upon my path, entwining star with star,
Your love as generous as a fern-cupped spring
Where deserts are.

FEAR

I have one fear alone in life. . . .
Fear someday coming home to me
You'll see me only as your wife,
The mender of your socks you see
At any time, and now no more
Need play to her the troubadour.

STABILITY

His cool grey eyes and night black hair
Are all of him that I recall,
And yet I met him in the spring,
And knew him till the last of fall.

We swam by night and rode by day,
And swore there was no love like ours;
We gave each other all our thoughts,
And picked a meadow full of flowers.

I met him in the early spring,
And knew him till the last of fall,
Yet his grey eyes and night black hair
Are all of him that I recall.

CLAIR DE LUNE

I had a little space beside my walk
To make a flower bed. (The dead old folks
Who lived here first had planted artichokes
And peas, and something with a tall, hard stalk.)
But I, I planted there beside the walk
My soft-faced pansies, marigolds, heartsease,
And on the other side, two small rose trees
Where summer evenings they could nod and talk
When winds came by. One moonlit night quite late
When all my flowers were in bloom, I rose,
And looking out I saw beside the gate
An old man bending low with rakes and hoes,
And he was hoeing artichokes quite tall
Along the walk, beside the old stone wall!

FLAMINGOES

God must have used dawn-tinted snow
To form these lovely birds;
Then tucked a rose of sunrise glow
Too beautiful for words
Beneath each wing.

Like fragile statuettes, or flowers
Upheld by slender stem,
They wear the cool of dawning hours;
For God breathed into them
Eternal spring.

BEETHOVEN

The heartaches of this lonely man, denied.
Playtime and love, could not be eased by tears,
But through his fingertips the empty years
Were moulded into forms and glorified.
Each day of burning disappointment cried
In melodies that stilled the bitter jeers
Of fate, and for a time relieved his fears,
And soothed the ache of love unsatisfied.

Did jealous gods of music take away
Each thing he loved in order to possess
His soul, to make of his the willing hands
Through which immortal symphonies could play?
If so, with naught but sorrow for caress,
Was deafness needed to complete their plans.

ROBE OF YOUTH

Hillsides
Are clothed in youth
Each spring; man wears it once
Then changes it reluctantly
For Age.

TO A LADY IN A PORTRAIT

Piquant, sweet and dainty,
Lovely little lady
Hanging on my wall,
Good morning!
Who made your little bonnet
With the ribbons on it
And your little frilled and lacy gown?
You've such dainty little fingers
And there's such a romance lingers
All around.
And that parrot on your shoulder
Makes me grow a trifle bolder
For I'd be after asking what he whispers
In your ear.

CLAY AND STONE

My heart was like a lump of clay
That molded to his touch
In just the way he patterned it—
It loved so very much.

But now my heart is like a stone
Immovable and dead,
No more can sculptor model it—
It was the things he said.

ALONE

Alone I wend my lengthy way
Along life's tricky shore
And pray for strength to keep the pace—
I will not ask for more.

Alone, the goal lies straight ahead
In unobstructed view,
Alone—but oh, the sacrilege,—
The way was meant for two.

THE DREAM OF SEN-I-YAN

Upon this dainty ivory fan
Is painted the dream of Sen-i-Yan;
Purple grass 'neath a pale green sky
Where flashes of white cranes go zigzagging by—
All of golden bamboo in a cool willow glen,
A rose-trellissed love-nest was builded by Sen,
Over-shadowed by cherry blooms wet with dew,
Pearl-pink as a seashell he paints in Yat-Su:
A bulbul sings by a yellow sea,
Sings, "Sen-i-Yan, Sen-i-Yan, kiss-i-me?";
Steals hydromels sweet from the lips of Yat-Su,
Singing, "Sen-i-Yan, Sen-i-Yan, kiss-i-you?"

2

Upon this dainty ivory fan
Fades the dream of Sen-i-Yan;
Purple-green smudges strew the sky
Where linked cranes once zigzagged by—
From the rose-trellissed love-nest of golden
bamboo,
The fleeting years have stolen Yat-Su—
But the dream—did it ever, or, never come true?
For this aging fan is but the scroll
Of the secret quest of a lover's soul.

L'envoi

Wells a wondrous cantata from bulbul and sea—
(Can joys vibrate on from *what used to be*?)
Are these faint whisper'd flutings "Kiss-i-me,
kiss-i-you"
The musical mem'ries of things they once knew
When Sen-i-Yan's lips met the lips of Yat-Su?

LOVE'S FUNERAL PILE

Our love is like a funeral pile,
High-topped with many a twig and brier.
For years we've piled it up, unknowingly,
Yet, always we have sensed
The thing unseen. Dreary withal,
And empty-handed, I stagger away,
Blinded by the bitter smoke engulfing me.
Like the poor dumb beast that whimpers
Along the same trodden path;
Or lies down beside me,—there to die.
At times my soul is lifted; I feel more gay,
But those, my bitter moments,
Serve only to heel my wound.
Thus more bitterly, and thus more sweet
Do I grope blindly around love's funeral pile.

SONNET

I walk amid the brakes and ferns and leaves,
And feel the soddy pathway under foot;
I climb the hill, and break the bark from trees,
And pluck the weed, and nibble wintergreen.
My ear is tuned to softly sighing breeze,—
The cowbird and the jayhawk are astir.
I push my way through tangled underbrush,
And feel the spider's web across my face.

But most of all I feel a mighty power
Go in and out, across and over wood.
Green crickets rasp at butterflies on wing,—
Frogs croak in ponds, green, slimy, and unseen.
No matter 'bout the world, or what it brings,
There is a perfect harmony in things.

AVOWAL

When I am old and broken like a reed,
And sun-sets spill no more the ruby wine
That bacchanal the birds; too spent to heed
The genesis of spring in sod and vine;
When the silver tongue of maple trees are mute
To this almost insensate shell of me,
And April breathes upon a broken lute
And silence fills the old affinity,
Then, as I leaf the page on fading page
Of intermittent memory, I'll live—
Despite this bold and truculent pillage—
As fully, having all that life can give:
And I vow, I swear! it shall be ever new,
My love, the old, old love I bring to you!

TREES

Wide marked with fallow graves is patient earth
Where peasants, scheming rogues and palsied kings
Crept to the teeming womb that gave them birth
To boast a brief dominion over things.
She watched them fashion crowns from her best gold;
And from her ore, hot gyves and blades of war;
And saw them scratch papyrus with the bold
And childish letters, *lord* and *avatar*.
She laves her wounds from rain spun from her seas,
And drops a seed upon the shrinking scars,
Then rhythmic beauty dances to the breeze
With arms of silver waving at the stars—
Through centuries her liquid finger mulls
Her nectar in the crater of their skulls!

HEIGHT

They boast of their tower-glories,
Each than the last more high,
Nor know that a hundred stories
Are no more near the sky
Than any river-violet,
Or than a basement seems
That holds a lad whose eyes are wet
With dreams.

STRANGE EARTH

Though there may be gladness
In every other star,
I think a moon of madness
Lights earth where we are.
I think those beings, winging
Over such a town,
Must falter from their singing
When, looking far down,
They see how many, rooming
In dark cities stay,
While up the stream are blooming
Violets in May.

RUPERT BROOKE IN SCYROS

This is the Aegean; this is that quiet mere
Where Rupert stirs in sleep,
Where vigil for his soul, that is not here,
Time shall forever keep.

There came an end of ardour and of toil,
While yet his youth was strong,
This is the corner of a foreign soil
That is, forever, song.

Sheer loveliness is on this slope
Where quiet tides have met;
I leave my laurel-leaf of hope
To hear his singing yet.

TEARS

Tears there must always be:
And I—who can not weep, while
Each new sorrow comes—I smile,
And others weep for me.

BROKEN THINGS

Broken shells on the seashore,
Broken stems after a rain,
Broken wings of wee birdlings,
Never are whole again.

Broken faith after a promise,
Broken hopes after the years,
Broken lives at the sunset;
God heals these things with tears.

CAREER

As, down the mountain-side between the crags
Of jutting cliffs and beetling, threatening, rock
The rushing torrent dashes, and zigzags
Its crooked course, and seems to mock
All things of nature, stones, and earth, and air;
Obeying nothing, dashing wildly on
To fling abroad the challenge, "Who would dare
To check my mad career?" And thereupon
Continues on its way with furious pace
Until, enlarged by brooklets, one by one,
The stream becomes a river, and the race
Of dashing, crashing, joy at last is done:

So Youth flings wide its arms in mirth and rage
And soon is Youth no longer, but Old Age.

NOVEMBER

O, naked brown November hills!
Ah, wealth of leaves upon the ground,
That once were green on every bough,
Now dark and dead they lie around.

And drizzling rain from weeping sky,
Falls sadly, softly over all
As if to bid a sad good-bye
To every little leaf that fall.

FOREVERMORE

When that day comes,
And I shall lie
As cold gray stone
Beneath the sky,
No earthly pain
Or hope or fear
Will touch the spirit
Gone from here.

Things will change
But I shan't know
Though seething tide
Beside me go.
Aeroplanes
Above may roar,
And progress
To new heights may soar,
But I shall sleep
Forevermore.

REMEMBER

And all the wealth of love
That human heart can hold,
Thou couldst not replace
With cold, hard, yellow gold.

BLOODLESS NIGHT

From the hills the sun is run down,
Bleached without light lie the bones
Whitened and mildewed the stones;
From my veins the sun is run down,
Dripping from my finger tips
Pale the hills, paler my lips.

VARIATIONS ON A THEME

I am a slight and mole-running laugh
Begun at all crossroads,
Ending at no fusing of metallic mind;
I am a pure and fluid sap
Flung forever in a quaint orbit
Through tedious veins of artificial mystery.
Unexplained and resourceful,
Buttoned to no creed
Yet somewhat laced to love,
I stand in the doorway and wonder
Why I am come.

Who am I to live?
Beat down the tall sheaves
And swing the censor in the market place.
From under my feet they have taken the cool earth.
Swifter than the blown cloud is the wraith of smoke
And the thorns crackle under the pot.

Or who am I to die?
For me there can be no last shadow,
No broken darkness, no clean morning,
I stand year-long in white light,
No music, no verse shade my eyes
Or cool the soles of my feet.

FRUGALITY

She hoarded grief.
It was the dividend
That fate apportioned
As direct returns
Upon the scant investment
That she had made
In clownish life.
Shallow grief,
Notes of self-pity
Long attuned
With half-imagined ills.

Grief, her scare-crow,
And she dressed him well. . . .

SUPPLICANTS

Lift your arms high, tall tree,
Reach to the blue of the sky,
Rooted to earth you must be
Even as I.

Chant your lament on the wind,
Leashed to the dust are we;
From hunger like unto ours
Springs liberty.

Welcome the storm that breaks
Tearing away your breath,
Freedom's requital, the price
Reckoned as death.

BARREN THINGS

All barren things are beautiful to me. . .
Straight naked cliffs along an ashen sea,
The gaunt old frame of yonder sailing mast,
A broken desert shrub with roots upcast,
Deserted fields and late unbudded springs—
I find a shredded joy in barren things.

MOON CANDY

I think the moon
An old lady with grey hair
Making divinity fudge.

I see her put cups of scintillating stars
In her sky bowl,
Pour in silver liquid,
Add a pinch of forest-pine flavor,
Stir and stir and stir
With a spoon of evening breeze.

Then I see her pour the silver candy
On the platter
Of the still blue-black lake.

Now from my boat
I gaze on the silver candy-lake
Happy
To see a night bird
Dart down
Stealing a taste of moon-candy
And I,
Like the night bird,
Dip in my oars
Stealing my share of the silver fudge.

THE MOON IS A SILVER CARP

I caught a star
And threw it in the lily pond.

I hoped to see
A shiny fish nibble the star-bait.

A silver carp
Swam from out the water-lilies
And swallowed my star.

HATE

How thick and so black, are the mists of hate.
The bright light of Heaven cannot shine through.
So clammy and cold, hate creeps over you
And makes you shiver, and shrink from your fate.
The thrills of music, you can never hear;
Beauty of flowers can never be seen;
You wallow in slime—shunned by all men—
You'll live in distress, and die in despair.
Amid scenes of hate, your life would be vain.
For what could you do in darkness and sin?
Cast away hate, let forgiveness come in!
Don't wander alone in hatred and pain.
Let love dissolve hate, see sunshine again;
Strive to be happy and live not in vain.

HAPPY HOURS

Happy hours, now passed and gone,
When love o'er any pathway shone
The days were fair,
The nights were clear,
Sorrows seemed forever gone.
Hopes shone bright as stars above;
Sweet the air with ardent love.
Too soon love fled—
My hopes are dead.
With aching heart, I sadly rove.
Back my lover comes no more.
A hero's death, I deplore.
To country's call
He gave his all—
He sleeps on a foreign shore.
But true love will death survive,
In Eden, again will live.
We'll meet some day
So far away,
Where sleeping love will revive.

MY ART GALLERY

I have a gallery of art,
Belonging unto me—
And no one can go in but me,
For only I possess the key.

And hanging in my gallery
Are views of every kind.
The pictures are all landscapes
And the gallery is my mind.

"O SNOW-WHITE CLOUDS"

O snow-white clouds in yon fleecy sky,
What purity you do signify!
Even so do *we* in our true selves express
That same purity and that same whiteness.
Not a spot nor a stain does your brightness know.
Not of wrong nor of ill,
But with light all aglow
Is our *perfect self* which knows no sin,
Nor matter, with ills contained therein;
And with Love all aglow
Like the clouds in the sky,
We praise *His* name,
And *Him* magnify!

TE DEUM GRATULAMUR

Dear God, I thank Thee: Thou hast made me know
It is Thy will that henceforth I should go
Singing to all men that Thou hast made Life fair;
How veiled in pain of Thy face hanging there
Shines, like the sun of winter through the snow,
The Peace and Gladness that are Thine to show
To those who know.

Dear God, I thank Thee: Thou hast made me see
Through the strong years that were and are to be
That bright intensity of springing Life
Shines through the blood that flows from thorns of
 Strife
Making the struggle worth the agony;
For this deep secret Thou hast shown to me—
This Life that flowed from Thy pierced side, with
 blood
Washing Mankind with Thine eternity
Of the Life-Spirit—"Life, even in death, is good."

TIME'S WEAPONS

The Armory of Time is stocked with Years,
In two great rooms the ordered shaft-sheafs lie—
The Darts in one have spent their full careers;
Those in the other room have yet to fly
From the great Archer's sun-forged, flame-bright bow,
Across Eternity's blue-vaulted dome:
Swiftly they soar, as new-fledged eagles go,
And yet with ever-lessening speed come home.
Those that have reached the Armorer's hand once
 more
Are scarred and scrawled with deeply graven tales;
So each Year bears the imprint of its score—
The Past's wealth; and the Accountant never fails.
The Forger models after bolts thus spent
The Arrows that for the Future's store are meant.

MY SHADOW

"I have a little shadow
That goes in and out with me,
And what can be the use of him"
You very soon will see.

If I cross the street, he's with me;
If I just run in next door:
When I sweep, he's right behind me,
When I sew, he's on the floor.

"Don't go downstairs without me,"
"Tell me when you're going out,"
"Can I help you, Mother Darling?"
So he follows me about.

May God in Heaven bless him,
My shadow, my dear son.
And guide his feet in the right way,
When my life's work is done.

WHY

When I'm in need, God on High,
I kneel to Thee, with piteous cry;
But when the road is smooth and fair,
Then I forget that You are there.

Why do I wait for trials and tears,
To make me know, through all the years
That You are waiting there for me,
My staff, my rock, my hope to be.

THE LONELY WAY

I shall not take the crowded thoroughfare. . .
The chattering and the jostling of the crowd
That rushes after gold and fame drowns out
The whisperings of the spirit, not so loud.

The whisperings of the spirit *not so loud*
But full of solace through each pain-fraught day.
Alas, I lost so much while with the throng
That I must hurry back this lonely way.

That I must hurry back this lonely way
With, here and there, a straggler by my side.
Much easier to press on with the mob?
It does no good to try to stem the tide?

It does no good to try to stem the tide
(At least it does no good that I can know)
But, if a Friend waits on the Lonely Way
And calls and calls, I find I have to go!

THAT INCONVENIENT PRECEDENT

I did a little service for my love
At cost of my convenience and my time:
His face was radiant as he made a move
To stay me from the sacrifice. Sublime
Was my reaction to his murmured thanks.
Another day, at greater cost to me,
The service was repeated. O, what pranks
One's own may play! For, with dull apathy
Did he accept the sacrifice. And, on
Another day when I had not a chance
To do this thing for him, stared with cold eyes
That pierced my heart like a two-edged lance
Demanding justice . . . which was hardly wise.

To all good wives I'd say: be not intent
On establishing an inconvenient precedent!

PRAYER

Oh, let me not grow old as they have grown,
Like zinnias standing stiff and dried, stalk-high
Against a blackened fence when spring is gone,
To drop to seed and all unnoticed lie,
Identified with earth and moulding things.
Oh, never let my laughter take the sound
That wind through grasses parched by summer brings,
Or rustling leaves that autumn left aground.
They are too weary, and their step too slow
To run with April through the scented rain.
Too late to catch the showered blossom-snow,
And watch Spring sadly, through their window pane.

Oh, time my going with the summer rose
That drops its petals when their beauty goes.

THE HOUR GLASS

Oh even this bright grain of sand will pass
Into oblivion against the gleam
Of all the many in the bottom glass
That went before to feed the endless stream.
And never can we make our fingers hold
Back one swift sand to break the stream's smooth flow,
Nor touch again those dropped into the mold.
We need not weep to watch the bright mound grow,
But turn to catch the now descending grain
And hold it up to feel the light before
It loses its identity again
To fill the bottom glass a little more.

And yet however swift their passage be,
The upper sands will last as long as we.

To A.

You blustered and swaggered wherever you went,
Your money and youth like a prodigal spent;
You cold-shouldered Duty and catered to Joy.—
But your eyes were the eyes of a hurt little boy.

So, though I outgrew you these many years gone,
The wistful, weak charm of you still lingers on.
And I'd lay down my body again and again
To cover your grave from this merciless rain.

RESTORATION

A summer wind had wooed the green-clad trees
To dancing ecstasy. And golden light
Of moonbeam bathed the earth in radiance.—
We shared the beauty of the scented night.

Tonight the icy wind howled mournfully;
The bare trees wept, nor cared to dance and smile;
The earth lay dark and chill. And then you came,
And brought back summer for a little while.

DREAMS

I said, "I will not dream again. Though dreams
Should stab like swift stilletos on my heart,
I'll raise a shield against each painful dart."
This vow I made—and kept it, too, it seems.
Not even that beauty which through passion gleams
Could shake me. Long I played the saner part
Of one who stands amused and calm, from start
To finish of Life's game, the world that teems
With loveliness unheeded. Then you came.—
You walked in beauty like a god of old—
The young Apollo never was so fair.
And in this breathless hour I call your name
My shield is cast aside, only to hold
You close; my heart to dreams again I bare.

RAINBOW

I dreamed I stole a rainbow from the sky,
Drawing the iridescent threads; and twirled
Them flauntingly in circles round the world,
Leaping upon the red as it flew by.
Mad, breathless rapture sought to terrify,
When orange slowly caught my flight and hurled
Me into yellow sun; from green I whirled
Through blue into death's purple lullaby.

When I awoke and found it was a dream,
Fatigued and dizzy for a while, I lay
In thankfulness for earth's rich color scheme
Which in its radiance holds the night and day.
Else like the paintless houses by life's stream,
Our roofs and cornices would rot away.

WAITING FOR RAIN

The limp day,
burdened, dull,
envelopes me,
smothers me,
seeps me up
as a jellyfish
seeps up its prey.
I am nothing today,
nothing can I write.
I am waiting
for rain.

ARABY

Ha! Incense smoke rises, and what do I see?
Small, henna stained fingers that beckon to me;
The eyes of an houri; a sweet, haunting face;
A slim form of liquidly blood-firing grace,
That tempts beneath shimmering, transparent folds
Made of rainbow pastels, and espangled with gold.
Now she's dancing before me, her skirts whirling wide;
Her anklets! They tinkle with each step and glide
To the musical wails in a high minor strain.
Allah, bring me her warmth next my body again!
Ai! Hot is the brass urn I keep by my bed—
But the ashes within it, though perfumed, are dead.

EGYPTIAN NIGHT

There is no twilight,
There is no dawn;
Night sleeps in your arms—
And then day is come.

I LOVE A PICKET FENCE

I love a picket fence.

A face pressed close against its pales will see
Quaint, speckled tiger lilies nodding there,
A worn flag walk, a shaggy, needled tree,
A still house basking in the sunny air;
The bench, with scalded milk crocks, sentinel
On short, square legs beside the kitchen door;
Mud pies, inspired by eager, pudgy hands,
Have made that shallow hole in earth's rough floor.

I love a picket fence.

THE TROTH

We pledged our troth, 'twas in my den
Although we did not have the right,
Your flushed cheeks paled, you trembled when
We pledged our troth, 'twas in my den.
That night, our night, we loved.—Till then
You were a star, elusive, bright.
We pledged our troth, 'twas in my den
Although we did not have the right.

DISCOVERY

Beloved
Your luscious lips
Were sweet, my dream divine
Until my blinded eyes saw your
Deceit.

FLAMING YOUTH

Flaming youth like wild fire raging
Flares then rushes madly on,
Only calms down under pressure
When life's milestones halt the throng.

Flaming youth with passion burning
Lives in grandeur, seeming strong,
But tomorrow finds the ashes
Of the burned that's passed along.

Flaming youth when aged is tortured
By the fire of smoldering thought,
Though the blackened cinders crumble
Marks are left that youth had wrought.

Flaming youth with only memory
Drinks from life's pure water jars,
But the charred remains will linger
Only God can heal the scars.

INEVITABLE

Moonlight silvers along the sand,
Small waves run up the shore
Two voices ripple back and forth
High on the tide of life.
Two humans who will be no more,
When still the sea will beat
 Upon that shore.

COLORLESS

A little gray sidewalk leads up to
 the narrow gray house
A narrow gray man is painting the
 house more gray
Two gray lives creep down those
 gray steps each day
To a narrow gray routine
I wish that scarlet and gold could
 be splashed
All over those two gray lives
Living in the narrow gray house.

INDIVIDUALITY

I think those clear-cut shadows
Would break
Like black glass bottles
Broken on white stones
That they would ring
With silvery tones
As the thinnest glasses do
If one but touched them.

Day deepens softly into dusk
Melting black glasses
Into indistinguishable masses.

BELIEF

Some unbelievers took an idol's clay,
Shaped in a form of God, and in one day,
Destroyed it, leaving pieces crushed and bent
To prove *that* god was not omnipotent!

But in their ignorance, they could not know,
Those righteous who convince by faith or blow,
That breaking man-made images can't kill
A god who lives within hsi people still.

THOUGHTS

In the formless world of ether
That surrounds our tiny planet,
Nameless, countless Thoughts are surging—
Joining—growing—for expression.
As the mind is, so the thought springs,
Whether noble, mean or shallow;
And degree of concentration
Makes the new thought strong or feeble.
If our minds could only tune in
On the messages so broadcast—
What a bedlam of confusion—
What a deafening roar of static!
But if one could have the wisdom
To reduce such strange confusion . . .
Separate bad thoughts from good ones,
Modify—enlarge—and tune them . . .
By the time they reached to Heaven,
Only pure thoughts upward winging,
On God's ears would fall the music
Of a Choir's harmonious singing.

UPPRESSION

The Ages come, the Ages go,
The same old struggles keep on though:

And each one finds himself the scene
Of every conflict that's ever been.

But forces of good are ever on high
To those who will let no other come nigh.
So the one sure way to come out on top
Is to keep right on pressing right on up.

LOVE OF GOD

Love of God, so I am told
Envelopes us as in a cloud,
As mother-arms a child enfold:
A sweet protective gentle shroud.

All this is true for I do know
His presence, peace and power,
The Light and Love that for me glow
As when sun shines, so when storms glower.

But dears, this secret, have you known?
What is it breathes this joyous air?
What draws Him nigh unto His own,
And having drawn, what keeps Him there?

Not only that great Love of His,
The Love He showers on cherubim.
Its Love of God, of course it is,
Love of God: OUR LOVE FOR HIM!

RESTRAINT

Dignity from indignity arose
And came with armored stiffness to his call
And there remained with him in silence cold
Aloof, disdainful in appearance to
Conceal an attitude assumed and shamed
Pretentiously to hide the fragile truth
That Strength—the strength of strong is but a cloak
That shelters seething, boiling heat beneath
Its coat of mail where straining refugees
The fiery flames of heated anger burn
Unquenched with cogent power to efface
The strongest steel in fury that consumes
And leaves him molten, quivering in rage
The while the torrent pent up surges to
Release and quell the source from which arose
The chill of dignity that would stamp out
Indignities as with a master stroke
Of vengeance long sought to avenge a wound
Inflicted by a stupid mortal's tongue.

UNFULFILLED DESIRE

The whole of you is longing unfulfilled,
And though the years roll by your fires are not
Yet quenched; and you, in silence mourn the rot
Of moldered ruin which dry decay has spilled
Upon desire so hopelessly unstilled.
Your wistful smile is but a token got
From hopes that were but fading marked the spot
With tender smiles that never can be killed.
And thus, a memory lingers of a love
Undying, ever faithful to the end.
With hopeless hope, love's bitterest reward,
That smolders ever on to swirl above
The pit of darkest gloom on wings that send
A naked, uncrushed breast to face the sword.

EVENING WISH

The stars bloom one by one from darkling blue.
Moon holds a fan of leaves before her face
And mystic shadows swoop and dart and race.
From gabled eaves above a bat just flew
To feast on moths the lamp's pale flicker drew.
A jasmined breath drifts from the webby lace
Of vines that screen my dusky hiding place.
The bullfrog clears his throat to sing anew.

What was today? I cannot half recall
The things I did, some mist sets them apart.
Tomorrow? Present minutes bind my heart.
I ask of life no other gift at all
Than that this twilight linger, and the tide
Of years sweep back and bring you to my side.

STAR-WISDOM

Stars look so cool
Like diamonds flashing blue
Across the night.
I had forgotten
They were flaming suns.
I reached to touch
A star one evening.
I burnt my fingers!

RAINY TALK

Slanting strokes of rain
Speak to me from the window—
Mysterious code.

My eyes can not read
The silver dots and dashes,
Wind-flung, but my heart—

WIND AND FIRE

The wind is a blustering fellow;
It puffs out its cheeks and blows;
It howls about our house;
It roars down our chimney;
It says, "What ho! See who's here!
Now aren't you scared?"
It is like a small boy showing off—
A futile thing, the wind!

The fire leaps high in the fire-place;
It crackles; it pounces on the wood
And consumes great logs in glee;
It disgorges great piles of ashes;
Its beauty cheers us;
Its warmth permeates our bodies;
It is not futile; it is a glorious spend-thrift,
Pouring itself out for others.

KEEPSAKES

A smile—the lighting of your eyes—
A winging word or two—
These are the keepsakes that I hold
In memory of you.

As flash of blue seen through the clouds,
As sun-flecked waves at sea,
So swift, so vivid, came and went
Those days you spent with me.

And now my heart can know no rest;
A memory poignant, sweet,
Lies deep within. Till you return
Life ne'er will be complete.

WHITE IRIS

Like the night beautiful
Wisdom you hold;
Stately majestic
Haughtily cold,
Slenderly regal,
Stonily pure.
White flower of beauty,
Ghost of a lure.

INHERITANCE

I am heir to all beauty of the earth,
To sadness, and the eyes of those who smile
At pain. To tears born of my learning while
I hear the message of the rain. The worth
Of toil. The great, gray swamp of life. The dearth
Of hours of ease. The gay, glad days my dial
Bequeaths. Slim trees that shade the longest mile,
The passion of the souls that gave me birth.

All this is mine, look where I will. The street
Cries out its song of life in every face.
I feel their pain. I hear their restless feet
That must move on, and in each life I trace
My kin to them, my anguished wings that beat
With theirs, upon the door that ends the race.

RONDEAU

Love has made of me a slave,
Terrible in all his driving;
I so timid, once so brave
Scarce have mind to keep athriving.
I, who laughed at such as this,
Where is now my scornful laughter?
Bartered freedom for a kiss—
Slavery after.

HER FADING ROSE

Wind, ever changing in force and trend,
 Working wonders, good or ill—
Blowing new fortune to all enroute,
 May its courses change at will.
Gently the breezes, as roses bloom,
 In a moment come and go;
Changes, too come in *their* force and trend
 But the why we may not know.

Love, at a moment too lightly held
 As in gold-hued meshes caught;
Years of contrition for that mistake
 Has a life of dolor brought.
Trivial, now, do the reasons seem
 As the weights on her heart impose;
Tears of remorse blind her troubled eyes
 As she fades with her fading rose.

Back in her memory's tomb of dreams
 Is a wee but well guarded gate;
Locked in that place are the pictured scenes
 Of the rose and its tragic fate.
Years and the rosebud together fade,
 But the scenes the more vivid wax;
Time covers none of the poignant hurts,
 Nor do memory's grips relax.

THE VACANT HOUSE

The faded print
Of the old sign
"For Rent",
Cobwebbed and torn,
Would scarce invite
An inquiry
From passer-by,
Yet in the yard
The flowers bloom
And grasses green,
For neighbors
Lack the heart
To see them die. . .
So the ghost
Of another springtime
Lingers still.

LONE WOMAN

There was one of whom the adults spoke
With voices hushed and low,
As though it were not right to speak of her
With whom they would not go,
Yet seemed to think no wrong of leaving her,
Lone, and friendless and old. . . .
What hungry longing must have haunted her
With all the neighbors cold!

Alone she lived, alone she died,
In death still maiden-named,
Life victim of the tongues that plied
The rumors through the town. . . .
So long had folks avoided her,
As she lay dying on her bed
She must have worried, wondering—
Who would bury her when dead?

SELENE'S KISS

From High Olympus nightly crept
Selene, Goddess of the Moon,
To kiss Endymion as he slept
And in his ear softly to croon.

So, Spring descends from out the sky—
The earth puts on its new green dress;
Birds sing, brooks gurgle, breezes sigh—
All life is thrilled with her caress.

Her kiss wakes the anemones,
Wood violets show the heaven's blue
Where they smile 'neath the burgeoning trees—
Buds of hepatica laugh, too.

We hear the grasses' whisperings,
The patter of the rain-cloud's tears,
The whistling redbird as he sings—
For, Spring once more croons in our ears.

RESURGENCE

When I am dead,
And gone where everyone must go;
And o'er my head
Lie winter's chilling rains and snow;
There in my bed
I'll sleep, and neither care nor know.

But, in the spring,
When gorgeous blossoms fill the trees,
And bird-songs ring,
And fragrant newness scents each breeze,
I'll want to fling
The earthy coverlet off my knees.

BIRTH, LIFE, AND DEATH

We are made in the womb of our mother—
One half of her, and one half of another—
And when we are born, she bears the pain
And all only that she may gain
A tender new life which, as part of God's will,
He gives to this earth and to life's grist mill.
Then we spend a few short years of childhood
Sharing those things which are both bad and good,
And grow up to become women and men,
To fight life's battle, to lose or to win.
We will know moments of contentment and delight,
Then like a flash, the peace is shattered: we must fight,
Fight the grim odds of life. And we will tire
And grow weary with trying to keep out of the mire,
The fog of life—life which God willed as ours;
But too soon the sweetness of it fades and sours,
And we become just another being in the human litter
Fighting among themselves for life; and we're bitter
Because we find that life isn't for us alone,
But all, interdependent though each has his own
Little path on life's endless broad road
And each has his style, his passions, his mode.
And, foolish we are, too often we scorn
Another though we in the same manner are born
And must fight, as he, our own little fight
Hard though it be. And that which is right
We must strive to keep right as can be,
Though your battle's for you and mine for me.
Life is only birth, childhood, and then youth,
Middle age and with it the dawning of truth,
The twilight of living and the fear of death,
Few smiles, many heartaches—and one last gaping
breath.

A PICTURE (FRAMED BY THE WINDOW)

The dusk rose and the copen blue
Of the lake. . . .
A boat tranquilly gliding by
Barely seeming to move.
Soft screening of smoke
From chimneys along the shore.
Dark silhouetted houses
Dotted with lights. . . .
Just a few more seconds
And night's darkening cloak
Will hide it from view.

A LIFE FOR SALE

Not a life with
An artistically
Woven pattern—
But a hectic
Conglomeration of knotted threads
And holes—
No mends—
For in the race
To live
No time was allotted
To go back.
Many loose ends
Are left—
Not gloriously waving,
Merely hanging on
To be shaped
By Time's irony
With the rest.

REFLECTION

The Moon's an awful jester
And makes himself too free;
I find that he is never
Where he appears to be.

The Moon is full of magic
To play such tricks on me;
To-night, he smiled *down*, from the skies,
Then smiled *up*—from the sea.

NIGHTFALL

The trees stand gaunt against the sky;
The purple tints are falling fast;
Deep falls the gloom, and deeper still—
But Heaven's stars shine out, at last.

Nightfall of life in time must come—
The day shall pass as night creeps on;
But though the darkness claims us all,
Beyond the night, there is a DAWN.

DEATH

Like children, we are frightened at that name
Which holds strange fables of eternal fires;
A dream of darkness with fictitious flame
That scorches and corrupts, as life expires.
The spirit cannot die, but life repeat—
In some more glorious form itself declare,
Until each enemy it shall defeat
And love becomes fulfillment to all prayer.

I hold all things are altered—nothing dies.
This so-called death is but a journey—West;
The soul encounters sin, yet sin defies,
Until of evil it is dispossessed.
The Inner-Man shall conquer time and space
To find a fuller joy—in some far place.

THE VOICE

I've heard the voice of Beauty unexpressed,
And now I'll turn and go my lonely way,
And take my tools and build a thing of clay,
And labor till the silent voice's at rest.

I've heard the voice of Beauty unexpressed,
And now though Love is beautiful and still,
The wind goes mousing by a distant hill;
The stars are rising near a mountain crest.

And I must up and labor, best to best,
Like one whom midnight dreams forever keep,
Until the dream is done, and men have guessed,
And Beauty speaks and I may go to sleep.

STRANGE AWAKENING

This is Thoth. Arise, ye weary dead.
Behold, the day hath come; Osiris waits.
Up from thy chamber! the night winds whine and
shake,
The hour is heavy, the gloom of time is great.

This is Thoth. All past and wond'rous things,
All goad of fears, and shell of human powers
Shall fall again to thee . . . the monstrous hours
Have come: Arise and greet the King of kings.

The vague and ghastly shadows flick and flair.
This is thy call:—one reads the secret scroll . . .
Anubis, Jackal god, will lead thee there
Dead soul, arise, the tomb has paid its toll.

This is Thoth. The ages blown away,
Osiris waits within the shadowy tomb.
Isis has chosen thee; return to day.
This is Thoth. On Earth the flowers bloom.

A CINQUAIN FOR SMOKE

Slow smoke
Floating from pipes,
Drifting from cottage roofs,
Rising from factory funnels,
Means peace.

FOR A MAN WITHOUT A JOB

I have seen many faces,
Beautiful, radiant, compelling;
Yet long after I have forgotten them and they are dust,
Long after I myself am dust,
I shall remember your face.

I shall remember your face—
The sallow skin stretched tightly across the sharp
bones;
The sad, colorless mouth;
The gentle, fevered eyes shining through the heavy
goggles.

I may forget my lover's lips and eyes,
But like a sin, like a hope,
Your face will follow me to my grave.

Surely here is proof of the immortal soul!
Your belly is shrunken with hunger,
Yet in a soft voice you speak rapturously
Regarding the high destiny of the people.

SPRING

Tall, white
Gladiolas
Lifting their heads to the
April sun are like young choir boys
Singing.

PARADOX

I shall live in a shanty,
Far away on a hill,
So I can see the sun-up
From my window sill.

I'll bake a jar of cookies
To give away each day,
And maybe love will wander by
On his weary way.

I shall die in a shanty,
Far away on a hill,
Watching for my lover
From my window sill.

HOPELESS

Love is a tramp in shabby clothes;
Where he abides, nobody knows.
I dream of him when I rest my head,
Desire him—in my lonely bed.
He may be a beggar, prince or a king,
But I'd love him if
He were any old thing!

LIKELY

I thought the world had atrophied—
Things grew indistinct and still,
Yet, I could be moved at will.
You were life, the atmosphere—
Fragrance seemed to grace the air,
When your love was only fair.
Yesterday I walked about:
I found the world was just the same—
It was so big and full of quips,
I bought another hundred chips!

YOUR CHOSEN WAY

I followed you across the hill
And waited there watching a while,
Watching each crag and winding rill—
I begged for just one cheery smile.

Along the path in other years,
Your tender words had been so kind
They healed my heart and dried my tears,
And gave me wonderous peace of mind.

You walked so fast upon the crest
That I was lost in forest brush;
Calling, I did my yearning best
To stop your urgent, onward rush.

Then, in the midst of silence deep,
The ache of sorrow killed my soul,
No one was left to hear me weep,
As you went on to reach your goal.

Now, as I listen to your voice
And hear you say, so tenderly,
"Sweetheart, you've always been my choice,"
There's no responding joy in me.

The only answer I can give
Is, "On that hill of pain, that day,
The love within me ceased to live —
As you went on your chosen way."

THE MOCKINGBIRD

The summer night hangs like a gown
Down through the air; the starry crown
Sends through the dark its golden beams.
Wake up, my darling from your dreams!
Awake to beauty, love and glee,
And listen to the melody,
The burst of passion, pure delight,
A medley flowing through the night.

It is the mockingbird I hear;
His silvery notes are deep and clear;
They mingle with the sweet perfume
Shed by the orange grove in bloom.
Tonight love stirs his heart and brains,
And flows from him in liquid strains.
The lover sings unto his mate!
Wake up, my dear, ere it's too late.

MYSTERY

I see the sunset and bright star,
And I hear moanings of the bar;
I see the mountain, bay and glen,
What do they offer dying men?

Is faith deceptive, made to cheer
The dying and unthinking here?
Is it the useless thought of love
That wants to meet dear ones above?

The tide flows in and ebbs away,
And man is born and dies to-day.
Where does he go, where is his home?
Does he end like the ocean's foam?

These may not be revealed to men;
Perhaps they are too deep for ken.
Why try invade the realm of seer?
Our world needs us, our work is here.

TRIANGLE

He took Martha to wife, thinking a man can mate
At will, choosing his woman coolly, laughing at fate—
Mere superstition! And so the other came too late.

He was bewildered, who believed his made-world sane,
As one, late-waking to the glory of high noon
Out of cool dreams, illumined only by the moon,
Who dreads to open dazzled eyes and see day plain.

Silent, to Martha he gave all that honor denied
To him, its seeming, flesh for spirit. With wifely pride,
She told that other, "We still are groom and bride."

Once to the forbidden threshold of her room he came,
Bitten and goaded by unquenchable hot flame,
And whispered there the syllables that made her name.

She, hearing from the farther boundary of sleep
His voice, descended, stirred, and sighed, and woke
Reluctantly, thinking she only dreamed he spoke,
And craving end of endless pain in endless sleep.

Shuddering, she drew her covers but slept no more,
Stifled her tears, heard nothing when he left her door,
And watched the gradual daylight creep along the floor.

On the morning they came to say that he was dead,
Telling her Martha needed to be comforted,
And left her dressing, "She is very cool," they said.

And she stood with Martha in that awesome place,
Gazing with burning eyes, wondering if he guessed,
Being now free of flesh, what fire she had suppressed,
Martha said, "Suffering has not marked his face.

"Still—I cannot stay here in this room. Oh, how
Death changes everything! I would not touch him
now,"

And left them. Then she stooped and kissed the vacant
brow.

JESTERS

We are jesters
We fools who fling
Dainty songs, unreckoning,
At heads of staunch and godly men
Hoping to gain a recompense.

HE WHO WOULD LIVE

He who would live must love, and love
Only because no other thing
Within, without, below, above
Can break his heart or make him sing.

YES, I HEAR YOUR LAUGHTER

Yes, I hear your laughter
Under April skies,
And I *see* the laughter
Dancing in your eyes.

I've no time for thinking
Why you laugh, or why
Such a charming vision
Has been born to die.

Spring in all its glory
Binds my heart today,
Slave to mortal beauty
That must fade away.

For I hear your laughter
Rippling, silver clear;
And though pain is somewhere
It has no welcome here.

THE POET

Imagination coupled with the man,
And local culture with a restless soul,
See on every mountainside a Pan,
And in the field, a spirit in the mole.
As Nature spreads with heavenly luster
A seeming landscape o'er his eye: the winds
Scatter far and wide his rythmic bluster,
And bring back fame and sophomania.

MY LITTLE BOY LAUGHS

My little boy laughs. Should I envy him?
Though his life is bright and mine grows dim:
There's many a bump 'waits his curly head
That I vainly wish on mine instead.
So I toss a torch to light the ways
I stumbled along in bygone days,
And give him a smile to cheer him through;
For I know he dreams,—I once dreamed too.
So now, when he laughs, I never sigh:
I'll not let him know how dreams can die.

TO A VAGRANT THOUGHT

Lost! Lost forever! Coward, sluggard, knave,
All that's good and noble in me
Now rises up and bids my heart be brave
Ere the surging tide rolls o'er me.
Now faintly sparkling on the wave lapped beach,
Tingling my soul when it appears,
Then shimmering, fading, beyond my reach;
Despairing eyes I lave with tears
Till blind despair blasts all my cherished hopes.
No. It grows brighter now. It gleams.
My trembling fingers in the twilight grope
To find if it is all it seems.
I clasp it tight; my heart o'erflows with pride.
But no—it's gone. My dream has died.

NO GOD, THEY SAY?

Then they have not looked at leaves
Nor drunk the deep perfume of a rose,
Nor traced its whorl of petals, deep
Dipped in dawn to make them glow.
They do not feel the thrill of lifting up
To catch the voice of God in music,
Even as a tree uprears its head and rustles,
"Thank you, God," with all its leaves.

DAY

I saw Day in her breathless youngness
Throw long shadows from her hand,
While dew like a lacy cobweb
Lay threaded on the grass;
And the wind blew gently in her hair
To the tune of a bird's sweet note.

I saw, in the splendors of sunset,
Day descend from the sky; then,
Like a rider bespangled and glorious,
With a last magnificent gesture
Fold a star-hung tent behind her,
Leading mortals to their rest.

SONG OF THE FIRE

I dance and flutter and flicker and flare;
I sing of the wind in the boughs.
The warmth and glow of the sun are mine.
Blue of the night and green of the leaves
Hide in my golden dancing blaze;
I only unlock the song of the trees
Hidden here through all the years.

IN THE CATHEDRAL

The soft light fell aslant sad Mary's face,
And touched her gown of her own shade of blue.
It seemed as though the Child, caught by her grace
And winsomeness, stirred in her arms to sue
For some small token of her love. I knelt
Bewildered, tossed and torn by doubts and fears.
My heart was conscious only that it felt
A need for peace. It might have been for years
I knelt there, so outside of Time I seemed.
I found no words would come; I could not pray.
Across the marble altar, late light streamed,
And people came and went their silent way.
I rose with questionings unstilled, unsaid.
Yet I was some way, strangely comforted.

BEAUTY

I cannot think of hollyhocks so gay,
Of pines against an endless azure sky,
Of purple dusk, of apple trees in May,
Of lilac shadows on a mountain high,
Save with a thankfulness that beauty's power
Can make so vivid all these memories.
I can re-live the rapture of an hour,
Recapture once again the ecstasies
That filled me with a joyous throbbing pain
Which seared away my little silly fears,
And made my soul to stand erect again
And feel itself at one with all the spheres
Only a god would know that He must give
Beauty on earth, that we might dare to live.

MAN DESTINY

Yea, thou shalt dissipate like winter snows
Beneath the pressure of the warm spring sun
Of some more vital life: the unbegun
Shall bury thee in voids where all life goes.
When weariness, the sceptic poison flows
Into the course that hardihood has won
And faith kept potent: thy desire has run
Thee to ineptitude, a need of woes.

Thy splendid form, unparalleled design,
Shall find the depths, abysm of the world,
And Time, whose womb so slowly wrought thee, curled
In intricate repose, cannot repine:
Eternal pregnancy that strives to cast
On fields of space the pattern that will last.

STRICKEN

The earth's crust shifts and heaves in tidal throes
While, bulging to the moon, the rotten sphere
Careens through crystal and the vacant year.
Through scattered voids that drift in bleak repose,
The vibratory lash of light and those
Obscurer waves that crack orb-cores come sheer:
Matter disintegrates as rays assail the near
Planets, and earth is pierced by splitting blows.

Exacting compensation for its birth,
The moon drags tides around the core-racked earth,
And through the lucid steel of night come rays
That crumble stone and number earthly days.
This is the firm foundation then, man's place,
A palsied globe corrupting into space.

INDIAN TO THE FETISH

Little god of red man,
Bring me hunting skill.
Fill the woods with big caboose,
With deer for me to kill.

Little god of red man,
Send us Harvest Moon.
Send his golden light
For Black Dog dances soon.

Little god of red man,
Guard me from all wrath
Of every man and beast
I meet upon my path.

Little god of red man,
Little god of love,
Little god of hunter,
God of spirits above,
Here in my breast I shall keep you,
Here in my breast I shall seek you,
God of peace, god of war,
God of Indian man.

SONNET

Long have I feared the day when we must part
And go our sep'rate ways, not turning back
To hold our love between us, heart to heart,
Draining our cup, that we may never lack.
That constant fear of separation binds
Us closer, making love seem bittersweet,
An evergrowing band of fire that winds
About our souls and burns us with its heat.
That flame will eat away this earthly part
And only leave two souls to melt as one;
Metal alloy to sell in common mart,
Phaeton and Icarus burned by mid-day sun;
And none will ever find us on that day;
We shall have lived our hour, gone our way.

KEALOHA (FOR NORMA)

Kealoha, last night the moon
Shone bright on yon white peak;
Pale, tender stars
Caressed
By Night's soft air
Broke through the clouds.

Kealoha,
Last night my dreams
Were of those stars,
And you.

This morn,
The sun bathed Heaven
And the western plain;
And the scent
That wandered through
The clinging air
Was a jewelled word:
Kealoha!

DEFINITION

Trees
Leaning in the breeze
Like little children,
Lifting their arms
To gather charms
Which God bestows.

TO ONE GONE (FOR LOU)

Yesterday
You left our little home.
Today
Time hangs heavy
As the silken curtain
On our white window-sill.

WORSHIP

Through the chapel's irised windows
Sunlight laves the altar:
O, purple is the sulla now
Beside the roads of Malta!

The measured hymn is sung; intoned,
The solemn litany:
Thick are the masted ships along
The quays of Brittany.

A prayer is said; the organ utters
Rich profundities:
Cliff-high, the breakers crash against
The craggy Hebrides.

The anthem's largo flows like lyric
Tides of golden lava:
Chords of color blaze atop
The jungled boughs of Java.

The sermon wings its worded way
From leaf to fronded star:
Above the blue lagoon slow sway
The palms of Malabar.

The benediction softly falls
Like silver mist at morn:
Moon-white above the cloven clouds
Lifts the Matterhorn.

WATER

The beautiful water, the rippling water,
It flows on so softly in rhythmical rhyme.
The wind in the tree tops, the green leafy tree tops,
With glorious music is keeping in time.

Sunbeams on the mountains, releasing new fountains;
New fountains of water to sustain the flow.
On, on to the ocean, with rhythmical motion,
It flows from the highlands to valleys below.

Green meadow more fertile, wild flowers more fragrant,
Because of the brooklet that flows in the dell.
On low hanging branches that hang o'er the water
A stage for the robin his love notes to tell.

HOW I TELL

Spring is here, how can I tell?
By the little buds that swell,
By the hum of busy bees,
By the grass beneath the trees,
By the croaking from the bogs,
Loving notes of mating frogs;
Everywhere the skylarks sing,
That is how I tell it's spring.
In the meadows cattle roam,
Lovers talk about a home.
Boys play marbles in the lane,
Robins chirp and chirp for rain.
Flowers spring up here and there
Spreading fragrance everywhere.
All the world begins to sing,
That is how I tell it's spring.

DOWN AT THE OLD HOMEPLACE

It never was a place for pomp and show,
Rather common as places go,
The walls were dark; its rooms were few;
Nothing in it was really new;
It was just the old homeplace.

In summer, days were long and skies were bright.
To us, the daily tasks were light;
We kept busy, happy, and gay.
It just seemed right to be that way
Down at the old homeplace.

With winter came the cold and drifting snow,
But we kept warm by the firelight's glow.
The house was filled with joy and fun
And all were safe when the day was done,
Down at the old homeplace.

I found to-day as I wandered on and on
The things that made it home were gone;
The trees no longer green but bare;
It hurt, for I found just strangers there,
Down at the old homeplace.

GUINEVERE

Guinevere is young and fair,
Shell-pink cheeks and starry eyes
Shining with a glad surmise;
Soft her dusky hair.

Half a wondering child she seems,
Half a woman, sweet and gay;
Changeful, she, as skies of May,
Guileless as her dreams.

She is bonny; she is dear.
Glimpsing all her winsome wiles,
Plodding earth a moment smiles,
Loving Guinevere.

FARM EVENING

I see it still,
That scene of childhood's long ago;
The undulating wheat field's distant show,
The path from hill to hill;
And straightly in between,
A narrow flow, a rippling sheen
Of water through lush grasses.

The sun's rim dips and passes.

The green grows dark on orchard-matted grade,
And oak and linden stand in dull and slatey shade
Upon the tree-tall crest;
Wheeling swallows fly
Beneath the dim and paling sky,
And flutter to the nest;
The stars are late;
Milk cows low beyond the pasture gate,
And blinking fireflies all the meadows fill.

Night hovers brook and hill.

THE CONQUEROR

The hatred of the narrow, narrow mind
Is loss to upward, onward, forward trend,
For all the good, the true, the fair, the kind
Are broken, torn. We cannot always mend
The hurt, the break, but bruise and often blind
The vision that could bright and cloudless be;
And leave the path of progress clear and free
With thoughts and deeds in simple truth designed.

The glory of the broader, clearer view
Is seen in patterns, oft observed in life,
Whose daily steps are closely guarded, when
With many high lights ever shining through
The softer, silver clouds and lines of strife,
We find the conquering, noble souls of men.

TWILIGHT

He whistled,
and the sound
was echoed through the forest,
through the deep ravine.
Great quiet
rested
upon the twilight forest,
like strains of beauty.
The sounds
of the world's distant strife
faded into solitude,
and it was Night.

WHERE THE WHISTLES BLOW

I love to lie in a shady nook,
A trickling brook rushing by my side,
Some moss to feel with my bare, brown feet;
Oh, for some lonely pines,
Their needles like those of a porcupine.
Rest! but how can one be happy with only play?
I must leave this peaceful spot,
I am going to go where whistles blow—
I am off for the crowded town.

A ROSE

Full blown it stands by the garden wall
Bathed by the dew, kissed by the sun;
Blown by the soft and gentle breeze,
Losing its petals one by one.

The rose may on the morrow wilt
Petals shattered, color gone,
But in my heart its fragrance blooms—
A memory lasting long.

SPRING

"Spring has come! Oh spring has come!"
The solemn pine tree said,
"How do you know?" the maple asked
And raised her drowsy head.

"Robin Red Breast told me so,
I asked him how he knew,
He said he looked into the sky
And found it turquoise blue."

And so they passed it on and on
Until the village knew
That Robin Red Breast said 'twas spring
Because the sky was blue.

CHARWOMAN

It may be that those knotted, patient hands
Harsh from unending struggle with decay,
Hold in their grasp some fixity, that stands
Secure, cleansed from the dingy thumbings of today;

Or that the weary challenge of that frame,
Bent stubbornly against the weight of skies
Heavy with silences, shall claim
Answer—and quittance—for the groping eyes.

BIRTHRIGHT

Citizen of no mean empery am I—
Fief to the wind
And vassal of the sky.

Paternal acres range to the last planet;
My mother's heritage:
Honey—and granite.

Wrapped in a cloak of singing flesh
My winging thoughts
Escape its mesh.

Who shall command them: Go, or stay?
Not Esau's pottage feeds me
Night or day.

EVE PONDERES

Of an old twisted tree
That in lost Eden blows,
Joy was the thorn
And Pain was the rose.

Is it tears make me see
The fang as the flower—
Keeping joy's hurt with me
After grief's fading hour?

DUSK IN THE CITY

The evening star flutters in a criss-cross of wires,
Like a white moth caught in a spider web.

A SONG OF WINTER'S ENDING

The snow is slushy and dingy,
In grimy blobs every place;
The landscape is streaked and messy,
Like a brat with a dirty face.

The trees are chafing their reins
Of confining winter and cold;
They will soon break loose and cavort
In an outburst of green and gold.

For three months I've hibernated
Like a grizzly bear in its cave;
Till now I am ready to murder
And bang on the floor and rave.

I've been done up in blankets all winter;
I've lived on dry beans and mush.
I want to go out and eat grass,
And crash through the underbrush.

ROMANCE

With his cloak of gold and scarlet streaming out from
his brawny shoulders in the rush of his headlong
gait,
And his rawboned face aflame with vigor and desire,
Day strides to the opal garden where, with deception
lurking in her slanting eyes,
Blackhaired Night sits delicately on a bench of pearl,
Embroidering silver stars on pale blue silk.

HE BIDS FAREWELL TO HIS LOVE

Down by the river
Where it is dark
And underfoot are pebbles
And bits of withered bark,
Where over small things whispering
That are not seen
Silence holds
A velvet screen,
Down by the murmur
I will go and walk;
Because I am tired of you
And of your talk.

AMNESIA

I wish I could forget
(Just as if I washed a slate)
Every single thing I know,
Every name and face and date.

Every single thing at all
That my faculties retain,
I would melt away complete,
Like a snowball in the rain.

And with empty, empty mind
Knowing not a thing at all,
I would stand before your door
In the dark of the hall;

And with vacant mind containing
Not a name or face or date,
Infinitely hungering,
I would press your bell and wait.

ADrift ON THE OCEAN OF YOUR SMILE

Just drifting along many a weary mile,
A wayworn wanderer, fearing to perish,
Sudden a radiance, one there to cherish,
I'm adrift on the ocean of your smile.

Transfigured the sky, life's pattern a different style,
Your arms now enfolding and rapture bestowing,
Happiness beholding, glimpses of Heaven showing
I'm adrift on the ocean of your smile.

LADDERS TO HEAVEN

I will choose trees,
Ladders to Heaven.
Trailing finger tips
Soothing my weary heart
With healing, and surcease
For all Life's tumult.

Like myself, the swaying winds
Blow them almost where they will,
But firm within their Mother earth
They stand emplanted, while I
Am by Life's caprice
Torn into ribbons.

But I shall ever watch their foliate pattern
Exultant in the heavens,
As rapturous they welcome tiny rustling breezes,
Or cyclonic storms
That crashing in sullen splendor
Seek to overwhelm their dauntless courage.

My spirit after death will float
In ecstasy, amid their glamorous glory
Freed by their restful satisfaction.
For even then I will find perfect healing
Dwelling close bound to Heaven,
Within the shadow of their arms.

SLEEP

The stars are sleeping, the wind's lament is still;
The flower has folded, the bird has sought its nest;
The tide that pulses the ocean's changeless will
Is now the quieted heaving of its breast.
From ancient moorings the anchored spirits lift;
On drowsy billows their barks resistless roll;
Through lands untenanted of the living drift
The lost and wandering phantoms of the soul.
The passion slumbers, the guilty hand is stayed;
The gifts of darkness are one for man and beast;
Before the table with sweet nepenthe laid
The monarch dwindles and shares the peasant's
feast.
The hosts of hunger, the hearts that fastings keep,
Now from rich trenches are fed and filled with sleep.

CAPTIVES

Not alone, poor prisoner, you languish;
Not alone for you the clanging gate.
All the world must share your bitter bondage,
All the proud your long atonement wait;
All the free, with unseen shackles laden,
Know the thralldom of the captive's fate.
Tho unceasingly they guard the secret,
Tho the garb of glory they have worn,
From the spirit in an hour revealing
Unawares the inner veil is torn.
Then I hear the blinded bird of Pharaoh
Singing in its cage of gold and jet.
Then I see the Monte Carlo gardens
Flaunt their flowers beneath a silken net.

JUNE ARTS

Sultry-still this night of June! A strange force
 quiescent
Holds, arrested, mundane life in a noose of heat,
Till it seems of all Earth's moods, changing,
 evanescent,
This phase has been crystalized, immobile, complete.

In the east a copper disk bars of cloud is climbing,
Paling as it mounts the staff, 'twill play a silver tune;
Fireflies, like commas bright, point the moonlight's
 rhyming,
Never any poet could write better verse than June.

Stars remote and blossoms near blend in mute
 harmonic;
Music in the lily's bells spills, as fragrance, out.
Hark! The breathless hush is rent by a sound sardonic:
Oo-oo, oo-oo. Oo-oo, oo-ooah! hear the hoot owl
 shout.

AS HILLMEN DESIRE THEIR HILLS

The ash leaves fall. The shapely tree that stood
Blocking our gaze in density of green—
A shade too solid to the carping mood,
Like comely matron of abundant mien—
Is garbed no longer. Bare boughs reach and sway
Against the windy sky, silver and slate,
And luminous with promise of some ray
Withheld as yet from painted hills that wait.
"Thalassa!" hailed the Greeks, and we: "The
 hills!"

As range on range their contours lie revealed,
Sweeping in rhythmic beauty unconcealed
Along the rim of Earth. Their quiet stills
Rancor, discouragement, and petty woes.
Renewal from that lovely margin flows.

PUT DOWN YOUR FACE

Put down your face.
Lean closer in the stillness, let me hear
the quick sounds of your racing heart,
O my dear . . .
Like moonfeet on the sands no man may trace
(a rendezvous of moonlight with the sea).
Let all your turbulence flood over me
who waits upon the vastness of the shore,
anticipating all you know—and more,
your tide sweeps over me, and now
beneath the moon our shapes are not, somehow;
because those lightening feet I cannot see,
and arms that hold me close, have stolen me
from worlds (always) and things I would erase;
put down your face. . . .

MUSICIANSHIP

Quite lost one night in sudden dream,
a strain of music crept—
up through the very soul of me,
a song to flower, leapt.
And then became a violin,
a rare musician played;
upon the taut enchanted strings,
his witching fingers strayed:
A moment with so light a touch,
on strings too sensitive,
they sounded to my breathless heart,
a thing ordained to live.
Waking, the dream turned back to me,
your voice spread me as wine—
the songs of your designing, made
the waking . . . as divine. . . .

COUNTRY DUSK

The hills against the saffron sky
Are amethyst and lilac,
Shading to misty blue and purple
As the saffron deepens to orange and rose.
A star, pale gold in the gathering twilight,
Glimmers above the indolent palm trees,
Mocked by a twinkle of lights on the highway.

FUNERAL

Silence . . .
Heavy perfume
From stiff, formal flowers . . .
Unbreathed prayers for the soul of one
Gone on.

PORTRAIT OF A LADY

Slender,
Immaculate,
With cool blue eyes and a small
Red mouth that says what it was taught
To say.

TRAILS

Hot Springs National Park

DOG-WOOD

Have you ever walked on a pine needle carpet
Under a canopy of early dog-wood
Where soft white fragrance blends with the pine tang
And pungent odor of rotted stump-wood?

SUNSET

The lingering sun is patiently waiting—
Loitering behind scudding clouds,
Marshalling a celestial pageant
Of colors unknown to city crowds.

GOAT ROCK

Early morning—and a shepherd
Winding, climbing to barren rock—
Always alert for swooping birds,
A silent guardian of his flock.

ANGEL FLIGHT

Autumn, climbing a rocky path,
Stumbled and let her colors spill—
Purple, yellow, red-gold, and bronze
Recklessly splashing down the hill.

DEAD CHIEF

They came, blazing a winding trail, Chief Diana—
Old and bent, carried by loyal sons and daughters.
Braves of old—seeking a mystic mountain
And its magic health-giving waters.

THE COMET

This wond'rous light,
In its ordained flight,
We feeble groveling
Creatures see
And try to measure
Its infinity.
A message in the sky
Is hung!
God's searchlight on the earth
Is flung!

MY SOLDIER

In far-off France my lover lies,
Under the sod and a low white cross,
He cannot hear my mournful cries,
Nor can he know my grief and loss.

Perhaps, when rain falls overhead,
He'll see the tears my sad eyes shed.
When o'er his grave the shadows creep,
He'll know I'm near his bed so deep.

Perhaps, when soft winds move the grass,
He'll feel my footsteps gently pass,
And when the sweet dews fall so light,
He'll hear my voice, "Dear Love, good night."

THE TIMELOCK OF THE SEA

I buried my heart in the sea one day
With all the thoughts that were in it . . .
Close by the shore where the breakers play,
And never are still for a minute.

And when the restless tide goes out
It leaves my thoughts go free,
(And this is why I say my heart
Is timelocked by the sea)

For when the tide flows in again
It covers them from sight,
And none may have my thoughts at all . . .
The sea locks them so tight.

I often wish the tide would stay
Far out and leave thoughts ever . . .
Be free just like the sea-gulls are . . .
And be imprisoned never.

I buried my heart in the sea one day
With all the thoughts that were in it . . .
Close by the shore where the breakers play,
And never are still for a minute.

PEACE

Many times she would return to where
A few remembered still her wistful face,
And something now they found was dwelling there,
Something that seemed to whisper of a place

Where snow-capped peaks rose grandly to the sky,
And sunlight lived days here when skies were gray,
Where golden poppies grew in valleys high,
And thoughts could find a heart wherein to stay,

A place where were no thoughts at all of death,
Or anything that hurt and worried so,
But only happiness within the breath
Of orange blossoms 'neath the hills of snow.

THE HOUSE OF THE SOUL

How shall I build me a house that my soul can occupy?
What of gables and rafters wide to encompass the sky?
Windows of opals to filter the rays of a star
Effulgently flashing its white wings afar.

How shall I rear on the frontiers of earth for a day
An abode fit for my dwelling from inanimate clay?
Slate roof or shingle to cradle the gold of the sun
While my feet in Cosmic spend-drift dabble and run?

How fashion a prison without the Science of God;
Model a Temple of Beauty from earth's indurate clod?
How paint the blue of my Being in pigments that
cannot die

When my soul swings with the rainbow across the
summer sky?

Where shall I dwell in the morning? What tavern
find at night,

When my viewless itinerary touches the Infinite
Circle where the Pleiades and Andromeda play
In orbits of light fully a trillion miles away?

WHEN WINDS BLOW OUT OF THE WEST

When winds blow out of the West
What are the sounds I hear?
Whispering carillons faery borne
Through the Veils of the Astral Fear:
Souls in exile nearer yet, and dear,
Beating their wings forlorn,
Urging and merging in the sea of Life—
Little fingers in the pattering rain
Tapping upon my window pane—
Lilting and loving and touching now
With intimate Spirit Hands.
Throbbing vapors that meet the quest
Of some ardent earthly band.

A PRAYER

A horror of old age is on me
Heaven send I go to rest,
Long before my body weakens
And my chin sinks on my breast.

While I have my health and spirit
Life can very pleasant be,
But I hope it will be ended
When these two have gone from me.

Give me now full meed of pleasure,
Hours full of work and play;
Let the end come very quickly
As the sunlight leaves the day.

DANCING DERVISHES

The Dervishes dance to a silent tune
In the stifling heat of the afternoon.
Their Master walks between each row
And urges them on; they go too slow.
White pleated skirts on tawny sheiks,
The sweat runs down their bearded cheeks.
Five hundred years ago they came
From Turkey, and remain the same.
Their office went from sire to son,
But now that's all to be undone.
For Egypt rudely has decreed
It costs too much these men to feed!
A bell rings on the breathless heat
And stops the pat of weary feet;
The men religious leave the room,
Rest shortly, and their dance resume.
They'll dance and dance and dare not stop
Till in a fit at last they drop.
No better aim in life have they,
Than thus to end their working day.
I think with Egypt you'll agree,—
That Dervishes should cease to be!

NOCTURN

Purring with modulations soft and low,
Like wind-thrummed harp on Evening's restful lap,
Strange echoes answering the fluttering rap
Of zephyrs on trembling boughs where streamlets flow,
As chipper insects chirp, the stars below,
And drowsy trees release their viscous sap—
Night gently creeps on daytime's after glow,
And sun-spent clouds earth's pensive outlines map.

Then episodes of ghostly dreams pervade
The mind, recounting fortune's favors and smile
Of sweet contentment, or failure's sad parade
Of scenes reproachful, that memory revile,
Whilst overtones still soothingly persuade
The soul to heed fair hope though fear beguile.

WOMAN

Her locks disheveled and flushed her hectic cheeks,
The slave and fondled toy of centuries
Across the sands of time casts eager eyes
To glimpse with timid hope the distant peaks
That aught to her of yearned-for freedom speaks;
Then sighing like a wounded fawn she flies,
Back driven by Man's brutal blows, and cries:
"I saw, nor fainted, far Freedom's shimmering peaks!"

Anon, her strength renewed, and seizing staff
She ventures forth again with bated breath,
Nor halts as on she clammers but doth laugh
That e'er she feared in liberty were death.
For now afoot upon the dizzying heights,
She fears no more but longs for loftier flights.

PLEA IN A HOSPITAL ROOM

Oh, move my bed beside the window, nurse,
That I may soothe my harrassed soul with stars.
Then if tomorrow find my body worse,
I will have learned to put by calendars.

GETHSEMANE

God, you have known Gethsemane;
Yet in your role
Lay purpose of divinity.
But why in soul
Of pigmy size in puppet me
Rises dole,
Rages demon agony?

LET ME GO DOWN TO DUST

Let me go down to dust believing this—
That loveliness created in the curves
Of apple blossoms shall not go amiss
Though petal after feckless petal swerves
To earth; that melodies of harp and lute,
And pinetree symphonies yet punctuate
Staid Time though trees be hewn, though strings be
muted;
That ecstasies of Spring intoxicate
The soul beyond the winter of the flesh;
That sun and moon and stars and clear blue sky
Weave Beauty's warp and woof into a mesh
To hold the heart eternally on high;
That there is love beyond this passing show;
Let me go down to dust believing so.

TEACH THEM TO KNOW

I say to you
Who are their guide:
Teach them to know,
With common pride,

They should not have
To live in fear,
For life goes well
Though trouble is near.

Children must learn
That's how they grow.
I say to you:
Teach them to know.

IMMORTAL SOUL

Her heart was calm;
The end drew near.
"Immortal soul,
The Earth is dear!"

God spoke to her:
"Thy race is run
Immortal soul;
It was well done!"

MOOD

There are nights, like this,
When it is better to escape
Into the ebony and silver
Of the rain-washed chasm of the dark.

FLINTSPARK

Bodies are not adequate
Temples for the mind:
The quasi-infinite cannot
Be carnally confined.

THE BRIDGE

Words leaped with facile eloquence
Across the chasm that we knew was there.
They made a fragile swaying bridge;
But, ah, I never was the one to dare:
I knew how little weight the bridge could bear.

A WOMAN ALONE

She hears the unremembered voices of
The furtive rain that whispers at her door.
She who now waits has never lacked before
The solace of some new unlasting love.
Like some once over-trafficked hall now void
And lifeless, silent with a thousand ghosts
Of unforgiving years that, undestroyed,
Now are her merciless, accusing hosts,
She listens mutely to the virgin rain.
This is her ultimate reward: new pain.
And yet for all those futile, unchaste years
Her sole repentance is a few brief tears.
She knows that thieving time cannot deprive
Her of these memories newly alive.

DAWN

A morning glory vine
Flowers on the trellis of the east.
The buds untwist with delicate precision.
Of a sudden the sky is pearly luminous;
Age-old snow, rose-silver as a dove's breast.

Dark takes refuge in a dense-needled hemlock.

THE CANYON OF THE SKAGIT

I. HIGH NOON

Noon walks with a torch in the canyon.
Sun beats on an anvil of ice . . .
The canyon—limpid amber space
Between two tall mountains,
Kulshan, white, seamed with crevasses;
Black Shuksan, glacier-scarred.
Space, walled with silence,
Buttressed with rocks and the shadows of rocks;
Scarved with water, wind-blown . . .
In its ultimate depths—the Skagit,
A molten trickle in moss of hemlocks.

II. DUSK

Rocks pour ewers of shadows into the canyon—
Shadows, misty as a fox's brush;
Softly silken as pussywillows;
Blue as lupin, as wild larkspur, as camass . . .
Lilac . . . lavender . . . plum-purple . . .
(Words—impotencies for ineffableness.)

Coolness ascends on the wings of dark;
A vial of pristine perfume is shattered . . .
Water embroiders a pattern on silence . . .

"INTO THE UNKNOWN"

An angel stirs within a rugged wall,
The pure light of her beauty naught can stay
Though she be held by barriers grim and tall.
With suppliant strength, braced for the mallet's play
Unwavering, intense, with no dismay
Her forward look sweeps slowly yielding rock
As into The Unknown she cuts her way,
Stroke on stroke, the future to unlock,
Where nature may no more oppose, forbid, or mock.
And *we* had thought that wings meant light and space,
Accompanied by such peace as floods the soul
When work is done, and weariness gives place
To exaltation as one nears a goal.
Yet here, an angel stirs sure hands to roll
Away all darkness, while her spirit dares
To pierce the mystery demanding toll,
For wisdom comes to her as courage flares—
And into The Unknown an aureole she wears.

"AS IN A ROSE JAR"

I found within a rose jar, old and sweet
With treasured rose leaves from some fragrant
place,
A crumpled paper, breathing words of grace
And thoughts of roses in a far retreat.
The faded lines were eloquent, replete
With memories and longing to retrace
Dim pathways in a garden for a space,
Where petals dropped unbidden at the feet.
Unknown the hands that laid the sonnet there,
Now worn and yellow from the dust of time
And rose leaves, but its message brought the smart
Of tears, the vision of a face, a rare
And vibrant echo of a voice sublime.
"As in a rose jar, so within my heart."

THE DIVINE THOUGHT

Being is a mystery
That finite mind of Man cannot
Explain, nor ever hope to see
Its answer, its solution find;
Yet we are heir to reason's flare,
And Reason is the same in kind
In God, in Man, and everywhere.
And Reason tells us there is naught—
Though world, or sun, or fragrant flower—
That did not first exist in thought.
Thought was the first creating Power,
'Fore ever there was anything,
In aeons lost in deeps of Time,
The sun, the earth, aye, everything,
Existed in the Thought Divine.
In silent majesty upon
The Great Deep, silent, stark and chill,
The Thought of God, long ages gone,
Through stagnant Chaos sent a thrill;
And, brooding o'er the rimless Deep.
The Archetypal Thought Divine
Potential Being wooed from sleep,
And soon great suns began to shine.
From systems great, and galaxies,
To smallest flower that blushing grows,
And oceans wide, and playful breeze,
The aster sweet, the fragrant rose,
Are Thoughts of God in beauty dressed,
In form that we can understand—
Thought materially expressed—
In form overt, at Thought's command,
And this, perhaps, the nearest we
The Great Enigma may unfold.

INSPIRATION

O little one, with faith your gaze aglow,
Your tender handclasp lingers firm and warm
Within my faltering one. You yearn to show
How strong your knowledge that I hold a charm
To loose cascades of beauty from my pen.
Each purple twilight, every blushing rose,
The fragrance of lilac, songs of wren,
Within my bosom now must find repose
Awaiting their rebirth in humble story.
Although there is no need of paint or rime
For eyes that see like yours, in all their glory,
The wonder of small things, and those sublime,
Ambitious shafts of flame are kindled bright.
The torch has caught! My spirit is alight!

FRONTENAC: LOOKING EAST AT DAWN

O violet night, like dewy petals dark,
This chilling hour in mystery you surround,
Ere wakes the dawn and hastens to embark
With day's fresh clarity of sight and sound.
In strange upheaval stars their blinking cease,
While misty veils are spread before their rest;
For one brief breath, heaven and earth at peace,
Our sleeping by celestials shared and blest.
To pearly gray your purple pales, projects
Majestic cliffs in jagged, proud repose.
The shimmering lake from eager depths reflects
Clear shafts of gold, of lavender, of rose.
Her matin carol warbling welcome fair,
The cardinal streaks a scarlet warmth in air.

PROGRESS

I've ridden out on Life's high sea;
I've known the terror it is to see
The shore line's false security
Fading from sight.

Lured on was I by this mystery
Which seemed to whisper of something free—
A new outlook on life for me
Promising light.

I've felt the deepening misery,
That first great sickness of the sea,
And the prison of clutching fear o'er me
Sealing my plight.

On sturdy seaman's legs, now free,
I revel in the symphony
Of the strong, reverberating sea,
Feeling my might.

SONNET OF PARTING

The time has come, my dear, for us to part;
My erstwhile love, it is the only way
To keep in memory the bright hey-day
Of our romance, when love sprang from the heart,
Set off by all the trimmings that enhance
Such things. You did not have a single glance
For anyone—no more had I, for we
Were both so sure; but we were also young;
Now many years have passed; the phrases wrung
From your lips, duty bound, do not fool me
Into delight—nor do they make me blue,
For life apart has changed us both. And you
May safely feign the grief a parting brings;
It is a woman's place to know such things.

COUNSEL

Poor heart, seek not to keep
Your eyes turned down upon a futile grief:
Let your warm pulses leap
To join the frolic on emotion's reef.

You shall dance nimbly . . . gay!
Pray there may be no day,
And flirt with low-hung stars on summer nights.
When you will tumble, shattered, from your
heights.

HOLIDAY

I run barelegged and with sandalled feet,
Through grass whose tears the rising sun is drying.
An oriole sings in a high tree . . .
I fling wide my arms to gather the winsome notes . . .
To lock them swiftly in my mind and heart:
To gather the rosy coolness . . . the mingled
fragrance . . .
Hoarding it away to remember in some distant city,
When an errant breeze strays into the narrow street.
I sit cross-legged beside a scolding stream;
Kissed by the golden sun . . . caressed by the amorous
breeze . . .
That, growing suddenly Puckish, snatches petals from
blossoms,
And carries them, whirling and curtsying, into my hair.

MOODS

Here is my favorite book spread open
At Browning's "Home Thoughts From The Sea;"
My sewing things are strewn on the table,
The Dresden cups spread out for tea.

There are your "Lives" by Plutarch,
Your "Blackstone," that old leather chair—
Dear God, how I love all these—
That "Legros", the sensuous curve of that stair!

Who will dust this room a century hence,
These things made precious because they are ours,
That vase of your mother's for instance,
Stuffed full of delphinium flowers?

Who will sit as we now sit,
Upon some future Summer's day,
Happy as we are happy,
And talk a whole sweet afternoon away?

Who will sip from these old teacups,
As they laugh, speak, laugh again, are spoken to,
With the table only between them,
And smile as I now smile at you?

Who will sit with his feet on the fender,
While the mountains there are wrapped in snow,
And who will watch the light across the river
Pop out like stars, and watch them go?

Whose breast again, will rise and fall
At the sound of a familiar tread?
Whose head will rest upon whose bosom,
In the darkness here, when we are dead?

PAST AND GONE

What of the things that are past and gone?
If they were right, or if they were wrong?
What of the unkind words once said?
What if our hearts were torn and bled?
What if our joy in the bud was killed?
A loved one in the art of deceit was skilled?
These were sad, 'tis true, yet,
Why lose a moment in sad regret?

There is much beauty and joy in life,
Don't waste time with thoughts of strife.
When you are drifting in memory's realm,
Go with Tolerance at the helm.
Let the years that softly glide
Blot out that o'er which we cried.
Forget that someone acted mean,
Remembering only the pleasant scene.
Let just these in memory stay,
Like beacon lights along the way.

MUSIC

O music! thou gossamer web of gold
In which all beauty and loveliness are told.
Thou, who driveth sorrow from the heart,
And placeth one in a heaven apart
From mere mortal, earthly schemes
Into the opal realm of dreams.
Thou art but the rustle of Angel's wings,
Inspiring us on to better things.
Thou, with thy blending, ethereal tones
Creep into our very bones,
Return loved faces in vision broad—
Thou, the very Whispering of God.

THE GREAT DIVIDE

We climb the uplands to the gathering ground
Of rivers in the making. Here the pine
Clings to a crag, and on the vast incline
We, deeply moved, in wonder look around,
Amazed to see the ground so gently rise
And then slope gently down,—this East; that, West,—
Where destiny decrees with stern behest
The fate of each rain-drop from God's blue skies.
The genesis of things is passing strange;
One falleth here and in the end shall be
Tossed on the bosom of a stormy sea;
Another drifteth down the other side,
Without the semblance of momentous change,
And in a peaceful ocean doth abide.

IN THE YELLOWSTONE CANYON

Who fashioned those great battlements, which stand
Like sentinels upon the rocky walls
That gird a mighty deep? With those high falls,
The canyon rings, and by a skillful hand
Adorned to fit the whole stupendous plan,
In colors so sublime an awe-struck world
Stands mute with wonder as it sees unfurled
The far-flung canvas,—challenging to man.
Here on a crag the osprey builds her nest,
And Beauty reigns supreme. The throbbing heart
Is strangely stirred by such consummate art,
Which feels as it with deep emotion fills,—
For Power and Harmony dispel unrest,—
The Infinite in those eternal hills.

A TRANSFORMATION

With shaking hand this man of gentlest mien
Drew down before him, when his sorrow came,
The impenetrable veil of solitude.
Some cur-like neighbors sniffed and prowled about;
And one declared he heard a smothered groan,
But nothing more. Day lengthened into night,
And, after lagging darkness, flushed the dawn.
Birds twittered to their mates. An iron grasp
Drew back the curtain; and he stood revealed
Whom they had known; but, all his tremors gone,
With lips that curled—triumphant, terrible.

WITH A GIFT TO A HOUSEKEEPER

Tick, tock!
I am your clock
And you are my slave.
I bid you arise,
Bake biscuits and pies,
Keep your house spic and span,
As I know that you can,
For you are my slave,
And I am your clock—
Tick, tock!

MOON'S VOICE

You do not know me, little man with great grief.
You do not even remember how far I am from you,
Nor guess how many aeons ago I leapt from the east,
In flight from the bridal chamber of my lord the Sun.
But I know you; I have watched you many a night,
And have dried the tears upon your wasted cheeks.
Now I speak to you from the unfathomable spaces of
the universe—
I give you my message, which is "Peace"!

MAY DAYS

Wind-blown petals of blossoming-days,
Lush, subtle fragrance, lingering stays;
Mountains of pink reach rounding of broom,
Moulded and fashioned by Imagery's loom!

Tangled wildwood, in swirls of glad song,
Ringing of heart-love, moving along;
Low-light and shadow, fleeting and gay,
Dream-world and rhythm; all soul-lit the way!

Deepened greensward, with spangles of dew,
Arches of trees, the world to pass through;
Bird-notes and echoes, murmuring sweet—
May-days, not grey days, the fair Queen to greet!

SUBLIMITY

Across the gold-swept air of Sunset-hour
The visioned sweetness of the Evening bell,
The gilded dome and glistening tower—
The vast concourse of Imagery.

Beyond the star-lit space of Even-song—
The purpled depths of that unknown,
The silvered crest and whitened throng
Aslant the still Uncertainty.

Within the sabled, darkened Span of Night—
The inky blackness of a sightless sea,
The pathless way and lack of light
Give forth no plan of secrecy.

Against the lightning, lurid, Starry Way
The rose-flushed film of other things,
The flute-like notes and break of day
Sound praise in gloried Ecstasy.

MONDAY MORNING WHISTLE

You call,
And I struggle up
From the swamp of sleep
To bear a carrion load of living.

HEART BREAK

My blood walks up my veins
With steps that lag.

As Christ walked up a stony hill,
His cross did drag.

THE SEA

Poets are all wrong.
The sea is a tired old woman,
And tonight I sit by her sable chair
And she whispers,
Drooling over a pearly chin.
Whispers old women's tales and troubles.
There is a rag of a breeze
She daubs at her damp face.

Poor thing!
She can't die, either.

BRAVADO

I wear my heart-ache in the daytime,
Wear it like a Croix de Guerre.
I can even wish I had enother—
Such bravery to wear!

But when the day is evening
And slinky shadows crawl
All panicky about my doorstep—
I cannot wear it well at all!

THE STARS

The scientists with tireless zeal have taught
The cosmic secrets of the stars; they make
Clear charts of course that the planets take;
With accurate calculation they have brought
Spaces and times within man's finite thought;
How spheres evolve, and worn-out cycles break,
How asteroids from far suns burst awake,
And comets are within Earth's elipse caught.

But do we know stars better, love them more,
Than when in wonder we watch them at night,
Which have for aeons been a shining host?

Soothers of souls crushed down and throbbing sore;
Sharers of joy so poignant in its might,
That lips have faltered as they made its boast.

NOCTURNE

Look, how the moon is shining o'er the sea
Veiled in a misty rain of molten beams;
Far out, the calmer deep beneath it gleams,
Where half-begotten passion sighs to be:
While inward, on the shore, break endlessly
The shadowed waves, and pass, like mortals' dreams,
Back to the surging source of thoughts and themes—
Back to the ocean's immortality.

And do you feel your soul's own presence leap
Into the night, and gather hidden power?
Does it too, revel in the moon-ray shower,
And glow with beauty that you fain would keep?
If with the sea you share this magic hour,
Then do you watch where angels would not sleep.

COBH

Strange, weird aloneness! By the fog surrounded,
As by a blanket muffling sight and sound,
Long had the ship, its engines softly throbbing,
Lain there quiescent, lest it run aground.

Shut off from all the world! Within our vision
Only the dim, unquiet sea below.
Thin, spiteful wisps from out the chill opaqueness
Flung in our faces misty hints of snow.

Where is the lighter? In the dripping silence
Screeching uncannily our whistles warn.
Far in the distance comes the halting answer,
Faint as a whisper, from the harbor horn.

Slow, imperceptibly as opening blossom
Through the dull veil a silver sheen appears,
Then faintest rose, a pearly iridescence
As of a dawning smile that shines through tears.

Behold a miracle! With sudden magic
The veil was rent that held a world concealed,
As if by hands invisible, immortal.
Fairy-like beauty lay beyond revealed.

Hilltops appeared above the orchid vapor;
Royally purple lay the distant moor;
Two verdant headlands crowned with peaceful farm-
steads
Shot through with quivering sunlight, silver-pure.

Guarding the harbor, from the promontories
Rose two tall lighthouses with winking eyes;
Beyond, a hamlet; from its heart a church spire
Showing where prayer and praise like incense rise.

Slowly the sun declined, as if reluctant
To let such loveliness be lost, and dark.
Against the melting glory of its setting
Stood a great cross, magnificently stark.

CHANGE

Not like the spring a year ago is this.
April was warm and sweet and full of joy—
The moonlit twilight and the lingering kiss,
The love that we thought nothing could destroy.

But winter's wind brought with it doubt and fear
That turned our fortress to a crumbled wall.
The longed-for spring comes with slow steps this year,
And you who once were loved come not at all.

SONNET FOR A RE-AWAKENING

We thought that love had died, or had grown faint
Beneath the clamor beating on our ears,
That freedom had been shackled by constraint
And dearness lost beneath the weight of years;
We called indifference victor in our hearts;
Our talk grew trivial, and our smiles too gay,
Our laughter too facile, and glittering darts
Of wit too frequent.
In the light of day
The stars are hid, but go not from the skies,
Knowing the sun will yield at last to dark;
So love remains yet deep within our eyes,
Of that strong fire the ever-living spark.
We feel once more that soul is one with soul,
And know that death is cheated of his toll.

A TREE TO ME IS A LADY

A tree to me is a lady of many moods
Who always is in accord with her surroundings.
Whether the sun is blazing in a drouth
Or rains have swollen the rivers
And filled the fallow fields,
Her temperament is ever in tune.

Carefree children romping beneath her branches
Impel her to assume an air of frivolity.
Then suddenly her whole aspect changes
To anxiety
As some obstreperous boy climbs
To a too perilous portion of her anatomy,
And she gasps lest he fall.

Romance and love pervade her every twig
When a love-intoxicated swain
Brings his inamorata
Beneath her ordinarily serene shade.
As he whispers delightful inanities,
Our leaves-dropping, eavesdropping lady
Sighs with complete understanding.

Old men and women,
Who have viewed most of life's ever-altering vista,
Find in her a congenial companion.
Gently she rocks, as if she, too, were aware
Of their desire for quietude and complacency.
And if perchance their mortal remains
Are laid to rest beneath her,
She stands, a sad, silent sentinel,
To watch over them through the ages.

FRIDAY NIGHT

The cold cruel moonlight
had its fascination.
It was so clean and sure
and where it touched
the dark, uncertain earth
there was a quivering
of painful truth.
The smoky clouds
from the bitter cigarette
would not even soften
or hide her from the moon.

"You are so cold,"
he said.
And in a little while
they parted smiling
with a calm goodbye.
There was so much unsaid,
so much of hidden warmth
she had not known or guessed
until he left.

"Your mind is beautiful,"
he said.
But she had no mind,
only a sorrowing
pain-racked body
that lay hidden
beneath some meaningless words.

He would come again
she knew—
dropping into her ordered life
like a stone leaving eddies
and ripples on a deep, sad pool.

TWO-SONNETS

I

The hardest thing in love is to withhold
The joyous spreading of a woman's love,
To learn that her gift must be bought and sold,
And paid for many times; the value of
Its beauty and its phylacteric charm
Lies in the skill with which the gift is hid.
A fragile treasure held within the palm
Of one's true love, and he must lift the lid,
His strength must force the lock that has no key,
His gentleness from scornful lips win praise,
His ardor kindle first, spontaneously,
The spark that soon had flared into a blaze.

A woman's love must be as night to day,—
That is, if she would have it come to stay.

II

There are some things which stand in bold relief,
Such little things to silhouette themselves
In gay parade, their passing all too brief,
Like fairies in deep woods or sprightly elves.
There is the sight of snowflakes as they whirl
Chaotic past the headlights of a car
Winding its way along a road that curls
Up to a home light or perchance a star.
There is the wind in pines, elusive, light,
The earthy fragrance after gentle showers,
The starry stillness of a summer night,
And sunset's crown upon delphinium flowers.

Not strange that I should hold these things apart,
When you wove them as patterns on my heart.

GRIEF

Grief, child-like,
Crushes its face into pillows
And weeps.
It sobs with muted lips
And sings a turgid melody of life.
It croons
Of the inarticulate things,
 the beautiful brevity of youth,
 and the tenderness of love. . .
It chants
Of wasted faith
 and the bitterness of tears.
Grief, childlike,
Crushes its face into pillows
And weeps,
Finding surcease from pain in the desolation
Of tears.

DEATH COMES TO ME

This then is fear; a sharpened sense of living;
Quickened desire for life; a sudden thirsting
For Yesterday. . . .
The touch of warm dark earth
Or spring buds bursting!
 This then is fear; a sudden
Anguished reaching for just to-day. . .
A poignant wish to hold this living hour. . .
 to stem the flood
Of memories and dead desire
 within the blood!

A WAY I KNEW WELL

I used to know the way quite well
That led up to her door,
For having had to go that way
So frequently before.

But being wed to someone else,
These years of silenced pain,
Now makes me wonder whether I
Could find that way again.

Still I feel I easily could,
And may, for fun, some day,
Though she would only bolt her door
And let me knock away.

THE WARGOING

On some exhalting lips, I know not whose,
I lingered once and, lingering, strangely thought
Of bannered legions and of battles fought,
And tall, wise men that went to war by twos
With some such kisses, like the August dews,
Upon their lips, whose frequent memory brought
Courage to those whose braving spirits sought
Death's most distinguished of all interviews.

Such kisses, as long hoped for and so taken,
Were forgot by the warguing in their cry
For cities swept by fire and they forsaken,
And cannons whose red mouths insult the sky;
But the same lips and the same heaving breath
Came down in dreams and succored them in death.

ABSENT

A song for every singing bird,
A name for every day;
But songs and names are all the same
With you away.

A name for every wind that blows,
Soft winds, and very strong;
But every wind is an ill wind
When you are gone.

Fragrance for each flower that grows,
Colors for the rainbow;
But colors blend in misty eyes
When you must go.

A heart for every heart that beats,
So come my love to me;
Beauty of flower and wind and song
I then can see.

TWILIGHT TIME—IN SUMMER

Though firelight time is gone
Still shadows are upon
The nursery wall
As day and twilight pass.
Soft as fleeting day
Moonlight shadows play
And make their lacy patterns
On the glass.

They love the glad surprise
In sleepy baby eyes
That watch them, as he
Sails the Dreamy Sea.
Oh, Fairies of the Moonlight,
Stay close to him in Starlight
So you may bring him
Safely back to me.

METES AND BOUNDS

"Something there is that doesn't love a wall."

—Robert Frost

Something there is in *me* that *loves* a wall,
A lift of lichen'd stones, or ruddy brick,
Vines on its shoulders, with a tender trick
Of harbouring stray plants in chinks, or small
Chance tufts of grass. Ah, fondly I recall
Palings with briers wattled through them, thick
With bloom a wanderer idling by might pick.
Bird-haunted hedges charm me most of all!

These metes and bounds—the mine and thine—there is
A lack without them. Undivided sea,
Wide prairies, how they chill the homing sense!
Man craves belongings past all question his,
A garden fenced from alien scrutiny;
A soul flesh-fortified from the Immense.

THE PEDDLER

A grey dame brought her offerings to my door;
Young, eager, rash, I bought in joyous haste
Superfluous gauds, gems later proven paste;
And ever I demanded, "Show me more!"
Gloves, girdles, fine frail shoes I chose that wore
But one wild dance; rich cloaks, brocaded, laced,
That frayed and faded—Ah, the cruel waste—
Bland, scented balms that left my hurts still sore.

At last I pondered little dull brown seeds
The weird old crone had forced on me. I laughed.
In bitter jest I gave them to the ground
And then forgot my planting. Lusty weeds
Pushed up—slugs gorged; I had no gardencraft;
But look—the strange bright flower I have found!

DAWN

The Dawn is that thin gray hour, when the light,
So pale and wan, first breaks to flicker high,
As if the world, all curious and with spite,
Like Psyche, lit a candle just to spy
On Night that one whom it had never seen.

HYMN TO REALIZATION

Religion is no man-made thing!
It takes a God to wake the spring,
To rouse the seeds and bid them sprout,
And then to call the flowers out.
Only a mighty brain could dream
Of how to send a mountain stream,
Laden with drops of melted snow,
To help the valley gardens grow.
'Tis only God's reviving breath
That wakes the trees from sleeping death
And covers them in fair array
Of Nature on a holiday.
Who else would make the sky more blue
For northbound birds to travel through?
The breezes know, and trees all nod,
But yet man doubts there is a God!

DISCONSOLATE

You seemed so pure, so holy!
How could I touch you with these spotted hands
That reached so sadly after life and you
To fall back hopeless, wreaking scarlet blood that
flows
Most freely from deep cuts of mine,
Made by the brittle fragments of my sharp-edged
dream,
My broken dream of you!

SPRING MOOD

The rivers of earth have run to heaven,
And now, nostalgic, return again
In a deluge of rain that does not pause—
The ceaseless cycle to complete.
The thoughts of my brain have traveled high,
And now, nostalgic, come back to me
In a flood of regrets that does not stop—
The hopeless cycle to complete.
The rain brings life to growing plants
That sustenance give to man and beast.
But what is nourished by my thoughts?
Of what avail my wasted energies?

REGENERATION LOST

Outside was garishness and haste and noise;
Within, a peacefulness, with dim, soft lights.
The organ's grand sonorities to heights
Of ecstasy uprose—and fell, to poise
Before another soar. The choir of boys,
Young voices innocent and sweet, black nights
Of grief dispelled from out my soul, with flights
Harmonious. The doubt that e'er alloys
My happiness, and makes of it a thing
Less pure, withdrew to wait beyond the door.
I stood entranced, exalted; longed to sing;
To join the adoration; but forbore:
My incubus without stood beckoning.
I went, and thoughts of bliss are mine no more.

ASPASIA

My Pericles! Mine by the quenchless right
Of all-victorious love! And yet such word
Is—blasphemy! Mine, mine, have I averred?
Dared thus to limit him, who in his might
O'ershadows Hellas, overtops the height
Of all the ages?—Should the echo, stirred,
Claim the awakening voice? The twittering bird
The dawn which bathes the sea and earth with light?
Nay, rather, I a vapor, he the Sun
Whose rays absorb it wholly; I, a spring
Whose crystal drops into the Ocean run
And lose themselves; a scent the wild-flowers fling
Upon the sacred Wind; and he the one
Pervading Spirit, my proud spirit's King!

LOVE'S PERVERSITY

I sang of love, for she loved my singing;
I knew not love, but I loved to sing.
Within my heart was a fountain springing,
And it flung its rainbows on everything.

But, oh, when she found that I did not love her,
She was as angry as angry can be!
And then to my grief did I discover
That I loved her when she loved not me!

Then my fountain of song sank lower and lower;
(She laughed, "I used to think you could sing!")
Till my tears made it flow again—somewhat slower;
But no rainbows fall on anything.

THE SPREAD

Little crooked, quilted spread
Snugly tucked her in her bed,
Cuddled her and kept her warm
From the coldness of the storm
All the long night, while the rain
Beat upon her window pane;
While the branches, too and fro,
Waved on trees out in the snow.

Though she trembled so with fright
Through the darkness of the night,
Nothing harmed the little maid,
Guarded by her quilted spread;
Guarded by her mother's spread,
Tucked about her in her bed.

Little mice ran 'cross the floor—
Never happened so before.
Nibbled scraps of cheese and bread;
Thought that all the folks were dead.
Did not know that in her bed,
Tucked in by her quilted spread,
Trembling so with awful fright,
Lay a little, lonely child,
While the storm raged fierce and wild,
And, across the room in bed,
Lay the poor, starved mother, dead.

BY THE BOSPHORUS

A garden fair and the towers and hills
And glory and color of Judas tree;
And the dip of valleys the Bosphorus fills
With the blue of lapis lazuli.

'Neath pine and cypress on slope so steep
A graveyard quaint with its slanting stones,
And tinkling bells from grazing sheep
That wander unheeding o'er whitening bones.

The delicate point of a minaret
Surmounting mosque and graceful dome;
The flying sea-gulls that swoop and wet
Their feet, then soar above curling form.

And a golden thread of meaning bright
Runs through the whole and makes it clear,
As a tale that is told on a balmy night
Or the flame-like vision of dauntless seer.

OF THE FULL BLOWN ROSE

The beauty of the full blown rose
We hardly know nor meet,
Till fragrant bowers with crimson flowers
Have poured it at our feet.

The depths of love we scarce confess
Until with tears,
The chalice to our lips we press
And without fears

We turn our dewy eyes away,
That shine so bright,
To peace and joy and happy day
From sad sad night.

DILEMMA

Love was just a tyrant
Keeping step with me,
So I locked Love in a prison
And threw away the key.

My heart, Love's crafty henchman,
Fashioned out of pain
Another key. The tyrant
Now walks with me again.

THE SILENT LOOM

My life is threaded on a silent loom,
Its weaver gone; and solitude is laced
With moaning of the wind. A veil of gloom
Hangs o'er my vision—memories embraced
With longing for a voice I loved so dear.
The pattern of my life has spun its hour;
The weaver broke the threads without a tear,
The tapestry a solitary flower.
Such bitter dialogue as we two had!
Hard words—then silence that was pitched too high.
We kissed to heal the wounds of quarrels mad
And then—the hurried moments of goodbye.

The wind sweeps down into an empty room
And carves my name upon a phantom tomb.

WANDERLUST

I am restless and lonely tonight—
Reason why?
My gypsy heart within me yearns
For a moonlit sky.
A love to meet my love calls—
Somewhere—afar—
O, to go down the road with kisses for bread;
And for light, a star!

FREEDOM

Give me life,
Free life unfettered by ideals.
Give me freedom, perfect freedom
Just to act the way I feel.
Give my mind a new awakening,
Let my thoughts unbiased be.
Let my actions be spontaneous,
To my soul give liberty.
Cast aside age old conventions,
Let me live and be content
Thinking, acting, heeding neither
Criticism nor comment.

SO PASSES LIFE

As a breeze, that gently blows
Among the trees and soon is gone,
Scarcely noticed, then forgotten,
So passes life.

As a bird, that flutters past
With tinted wings or scarlet breast,
A flash of color, soon forgotten,
So passes life.

As a flower, fresh and fragrant
Bit of blue or white or red,
Withers quickly, is forgotten,
So passes life.

As a sunset, vivid, changing,
Silent beauty, calls attention
For a moment, soon forgotten,
So passes life.

A bit of joy, unhappiness
A smile, a tear, hard work and pain,
Eternal rest, then soon forgotten,
So passes life.

JUST A YEAR

The first wild gush
Of the first mad song
Of the first returning bird
Thrilled the first little bud
Of the aspen tree
'Till it opened when it heard

The first little chirp
Of the first little bird
In the little mud brown nest
Cheered the sun seared leaves
Of the aspen tree
For the work which God had blessed

The last sweet trill
Of the last sweet song
Of the last departing bird
Thrilled the last red leaf
Of the aspen tree
'Till it trembled when it heard.

BRAIN DUST

As the sweet long swells of breeze
Roll through a lilac scented gorge
Of green and budding brush,
And in passing fan my troubled brow
Displacing truant tresses;
Vehemently I wish
That ere too many precious years
Have turned into the past
Some sweet refreshing breeze
Would sweep from out the great unknown,
And eddy down into the Catacombs of my poor
fevered brain
Displacing dust engathered there.

LAST NIGHT

Last night it rained and I dreamed
That you were far from my side;
And I thought a rising tide
Swelled in my heart and it seemed
The rain was tear drops and they streamed
Through my numb half-wake thought
I knew that love could not be bought,
Could only be shared if it was esteemed.

Last night I knew while it was dark
The sun was somewhere shining out.
I need not cry, I need not doubt
But to keep the twain-hearts, fan the spark,
Be sanely true; fair with the light
God gave to me for you last night.

NO EASY DAYS

There are no more easy days
That we may pipe away at will
For facing now the heart must still
Be strong in power and we must gaze
Across the desert evil ways
That men have made and set their trap
So weak souls might fall into their lap,
Unless they awake from the enveloping haze.

These are the days when men must see
The turmoil of bad faith at play
And light their candles night and day
Now or never if they would be free,
Of iron bands man made to hold
The flesh, the will, the heart and soul.

APOCALYPSE

Shall it be night with star or sun
With day? O not to leave undone—
My lips are praying!

Fumbling I catch in hollowed fists
The futile fruit of groping, mists'
Too slow dissolving.

Fumbling from dawn to creeping age,
Seeking in every pang the wage
Of life's absolving—

The gate unlatched—my soul stands dumb!
My branches flower. And though I come
With lips cold, graying,

With burning vision that I see
What God has sealed to prayer of me—
The end—of praying.

MOMENT CAUGHT IN PASSING

Moment caught in passing—quick, O isolate
It now! It is too beautiful for me
Even to remember. Too radiant to see
Its own ghost shadow. Bright of questing fate
I dare not rob it of so high estate
By weakening grief. I leave it that it be
Strength of a flying wing, my penury
Into gold of madness born. A breath elate
Higher than air's swift height—deep as deep hell,
Undreamt of dream. The long untasted cup
Spatters my lips. Out of the longing, up
Into endlessness of pain—foreboding knell—
Where shall the questing end, and quest go out?
Hush to a glorious note . . . the rabble's shout!

A WIDOWER ON THE WAY TO GIRGENTI

I'm sure glad to see somebodies from ma country
I knew you by your shoes
There's na chance in Etily for anybodies
Just a place ta snooze
And wonder why the sun
Does not go out—lose his Etna breath
In Night's blacka crater—Death
Make a clean breast a life
And alla the heat He's wasted—
Just lasta week I lost my wife
The docturs in Chicago lied.
They said: "The sun isa hot in Etily
It's just a two weeks ride ta health—"
She'd ruther a died in Amurica.
We worked side by side
Rolling tobacco.
They should a told me there was na chance
I dona like to be going back alone
There's nothing left ta work for now
—If I can helpa you in this country somehow
Let me know
I will na lie to you—Amuricun.

AT THE GRAND CANYON

Drum Being!
Hewn from crescending Past
the epic cauldron of you seethes
more vastly empty, and more vastly full.
Life's parted lips are dumb. Mighty decrees
move strangled in a pageantry of Peace
Drum Being!
Let Finality be stretched from lip to lip
Mecurial silence tighten in one leap of sweetest agony
against the tautness of eternity
The color-spectrum speak but once
Sprung gods explain you.

SONNET

Whence comes the soul? Struck from what anvil?

Spark

Released by passion's heedless ecstasy,

Enkindles it, a separate entity

In upper air? Does it on life embark

By God's decree? Does He in blind and stark

Indifference cast it forth, nor choose to see

What lack or fitness guide its destiny,

Nor care what futile target be its mark?

Not thus do souls embody, but by plan

Long charted! Offspring of the ages, they

Their heritage must meet, accept and mould.

No power creative, be it God or man,

May turn aside, or even briefly stay

The racial urge! 'Tis Law, and Law must hold!

A ROSE

I strolled at eve amid my garden's bloom

And plucked a rose. Its o'er-ripe petals sweet,

In mimic shower, fell softly at my feet,

And through their mist a Presence lit the gloom.

'Twas one who once had known the inner room

Of my locked heart; still his its every beat

When dreamland forces Death to taste defeat,

Though he long gone, lies in an alien tomb.

Dear voice of dreams! "In sweeter garden, Love,

And fadeless beauty, soon this rose shall grow

And bud anew! From out this earthly bed

I pluck its soul, to plant for you above."

And then, through swooning sense, as cold winds
blow,

A friend's cry pierced, "Oh look, this rose is
dead!"

SPEED

Just an old nag hitched to a buggy frail
Trotting along, and switching her tail,
And an old bent form on the battered seat
Jogging behind in the dust and the heat—
And "Holding the traffic up" was the charge;
Such a nuisance to speed should not be at large,
For the drivers of cars and limousines
Had been forced to stop; and their fast machines
Were damaged and jarred; and their owners, vexed,
Had had him arrested. His case came next.

"Well, what were you doing on the highway
With a horse and buggy in that place, pray?"
Said the Judge; and the old man raised his head.
"I was on my way to Em's grave," he said;
"Hain't been there much, Judge, sence she has been
dead;
Been down with the flu, and was sick a-bed;
But the day was warm, and spring bein' here,
I felt that she'd like—well—to hev me near,
So I went jest as best I could." The place
Was hushed. The Judge, it seems, dismissed the case.

STUMPS

Stumps are the tombstones of dead trees,
Marking the place where they lived and died
Like a battle's dead. The proof are these:
No monuments of pride.

But, as they gave their precious lives
They gathered toll as they fell; and then
Their victims, trimmed by surgeon's knives,
Lived on—just stumps of men.

NOCTURNE

The sad-eyed angel of the night is playing
A sobbing lullaby on silver strings.
The silent stars have sprayed the sky with gold. . .
Softly . . . softly . . . falls the song she sings.

Wantonly, the careless south wind blowing
Makes a little whimpering in the leaves,
A drowsy melody for sparrows sleeping,
Their heads beneath their wings, among the eaves.

Sweet depth of night, softly, serenely playing
On harpstrings of tranquility whose tones
Sound in the shadows, carried down the wind,
Like running water bubbling over stones.

Mood

Lift a soft cry to the weary singing of the stars. . .
The candle gutters and the golden bowl
We drank from sheds no drop of joy again;
The shadows lengthen; on our drowsy eyes
Night shall soon cast the avalanche of day.
This were a moment, this a heritage,
Throbbing and pale as a sad lone star. . .
That were tomorrow, that were yesterday,
And each as meaning . . . meaningless . . . as should
A blind old Cyclops, raging, stoop and fling
A blood red sun into a rim of sky.

DULCI TURE

In the dark 'round the quiet arches
Of my chapel of heart's desire
Steadily mounts in spirals
The smoke of its altar fire;

It curls up from the bronzes
And beats up to the roof
Like the flexures of eternity,
With a stateliness aloof.

The silvery wreaths yet struggle,
Spirits released by fire,
And buffet against the Gothics
To be out, to spread, to mount higher.

There are blinding lights in that dimness
That dazzle and charm,—then fade,,
As the altar fire burns brighter
For the penitent prayers I have made.

VERE DISTRACTUS

When the spring's in the heart of the starling
And tulip-rows march in the sun;
When the ivy-vine starts the unsnarling
Of tendrils last springtime begun;
When the honey-bee revels a-Maying,
My mind in the field goes a-straying.

In sunny fields lush with sweet clover
He wanders in rustic content;
With Sylvanus he gipsies, a rover
That knows not when day is well spent;
And with evening and swallows' homecoming
He is still in the apple-tree humming.

FORGIVENESS

Forgetfulness of self—
The lesson of our Lord;
Drawing us toward Him
With a silver cord.

Bound to the Cross
Himself He would not save:
It was the robber that
His heart forgave.

One wonders with what sorrow,
With what pitying grief,
Looked down from Heaven that night
The pardoned thief!

THE CANDLE

Who lights his little candle,
Who shields its tiny flame,
Oh little child remember
The dear Lord Jesus' name!

The Light of all the living,
'Twas so He came to be;
Tall and white and slender
A candle sweet was He!

Burn my little candle,
Shine, my taper, shine!
So shall I remember
The Lord that is divine!

A CLOUD OF SILVER

See upon the leaden sky,
The billowed fleece of white.
A fearful mutt'ring where doth lie
The darkest of the night.
Now thou spreadest and to view
Present thy splendor all anew;
Like fleeting isles in blue midsea
Doth claim a sailor's memory.

Or when at twilight's dusky still,
The vagabond who tops the hill
Shall see below him, gravely spread,
Scenes of boyhood that are dead.
The mantle of the moon
I know that thou must be.
Now you part and there are wafted
Drifting wisps of glory.

MECCA

Tonight, the wan moon swings even lower
Than it drooped before. His steps are slower,
And his pilgrim's staff bears his weary weight;
A failing burden that shuffles to abate
The dread that takes his swift limbs in seizure—
Confers in its stead ages hideous treasure.
Drives into his gray patriarchal head
A horde of leering imps of hate and dread;
Teeming with the clamor of impish toil—
The Mecca yet a vision; its dank soil
That rears dazzling pinnacles and clear spires
Shot with colors, a myriad of fires
And one spotless art—a white minaret,
Of evening and of utter coolness met.

L'ENVOI

The ponderous applause of darksome pines
Carried by winter winds from barren shore
Disturbs the eaglet; yet the anxious pen
Finds solace there, O stifle not that roar.

Voice of the dead now speak through frozen lips,
The velvet softness of a world too dark
Beckons me on. Come breathe it in my ear,
My chariot awaits and I must soon embark.

CHANNING'S SYMPHONY

Let me live to seek elegance, not luxury;
To bear all bravely and to do all cheerfully,
Discard all fashion, rather be refined,
To question wisely and possess an open mind.
Let me give ear to stars, and babes, and birds,
And sages; to avoid harsh spoken words.
May I think quietly, be ever gentle when I talk,
Await occasions; never hurry as I walk.
Let the unbidden and unconscious spring
Out of the ordinary, common thing.
The life that I would live as this must be—
The sum and substance of my symphony.

REMORSE

Unasked, you made your vow.
You kissed me as you said,
"I love you, Dear."
And now—
I wish that you were dead.

THE COSMIC LOOM

The poetry of winds and rustling leaves
Reflected in the shimmering mountain stream
Is Love's unceasing cosmic loom that weaves
The velvet of a maiden's sweetest dream.

TIME

Deep into Time's unfathomed pit they threw
Night's shutter and the flaming cloak of day;
The gods' bright rosary—the Milky Way—
And all beyond the concave bowl of blue;
Life's embryo-forces, hid in new-born dew;
Peace olive leaved, war's death-accountred play;
The soul's desire; ambition's lurid ray—
Fruits that in Hope's illusive orchard grew.
Time heeded none of them, nor beast nor bird;
And sat alone unmoved and passion-free.
But by his side there lay a dusty sherd
With runic writing, and I chanced to see
Beneath the dust this cabalistic word;
"I am twin brother of Eternity".

THE UNCHARTED SEA

You bade me solve the riddle of the Sphinx
In answer to my love-impassioned plea:
"Somewhere there is a deep uncharted sea
Of which they say that who unwary slinks
Beside it in Circean durance sinks.
That you must find, for such is my decree,
And when you shall have found it, bring to me
Full sounding of the depth within its brinks."
A sea unmeasured as the zenith skies
Resistless with magnetic forces drew
The compass needle of my heart around
Until it pointed to your Sphinxian eyes.
Nor could I sound its depth, and yet I knew
That the uncharted sea I there had found.

AUTUMN LEAVES

Down they come, the Autumn leaves,
Playing tag among the eaves,
Skipping here and dancing there,
Tossing, jumping, everywhere.

Scattered all about our feet,
Racing down the quiet street,
Finding every secret nook,
Swiftly sailing in the brook.

Whirling 'round the quiet pond,
Chasing up the hill beyond,
Resting but a second's space,
Then off, upon another chase.

Think you that falling leaves are sad?
Not so, but friendly, joyous, glad.
They skip and whistle, dance and hum,
When winds of Autumn whisper—"Come".

THE FIRST SNOW

From the arms of the north, last night, it came,
On the wings of a wind that stung
The glowing cheek to a deeper hue,
And into the nostrils flung—

The sharp perfume of the northland's breath,
The cold, hard smell of sleet,
The mingled odor of spruce and pine—
Stinging and keen and sweet.

Then, like a blanket, the north wind spread
The snow, in his careless wake,
And a drab old earth looked up to catch
Each sparkling, crystal flake.

LOVE-LEAVES

Like one raking leaves on a windy day
Is my heart reaching for your love.
I shall not be satisfied with a little pile here,
A little pile there,
That other loves have blown into the corners of your
heart:
I must seek each love-leaf
And thrust it greedily
Into our dream-bag,
Which our children will rifle tomorrow.

BLUE-GOLD DAY

A blue-gold day came.
We reveled where the sun,
Wading in the blue lagoon of the sky,
Raced the noon-cloud's shadow
Over the field.

The field-stubble cried a sharp cry
Where it looked up at the runners:
Slender spears of bronze, shaved from the sun,
It cried.

Soon a wind came
Coaxing an idling cloud to the far end of the arena,
Where it fretted.

But we reveled and laughed the day through—
Until the sun blushed red from running
And lay down to sleep in the sky.

DUNES

Dunes are but sands
Blown in from the sea
On wings of destiny
Perchance to me.

AMONG THE DUNES

Under cover of silence
Long thin fingers beckon
And give mysterious promise of secrecy profound;
Fascinating forms allure
Us to join in a phantoms' dance:
Whirling, wraithlike figures—
Either memories or dreams.

THE GROUND IVY

Most tiny flower that blossoms low on the ground,
Why are you? What is your purpose?
Is it the same as mine?
Are you but a small detail
In some great mysterious fathomless plan?
Modest, yet you grace the stem proudly;
You are unafraid;
In perfection of form and color
You reflect truth and purity,
Divinity inherent.
Little flower, could you speak,
Would you voice the wisdom I seek?

BRAGGADOCIO

The sky is dull grey tonight
And the wind complains to the lofty elms;
He tells in noisy phrases
The feats of strength he has performed.
But the elms are wrapped in peaceful sleep,
They rustle very softly
In their tender dreaminess—
The wind is heard by the dull grey sky—
And me.

FIREFLIES

Sometimes I think that fireflies
Are little lamplighters
Passing by, on their way
To Fairyland.

REFLECTION

The dew that we see in the morning
Are the tears that were shed last night,
And the sky's crimson flush at dawning
Is stained with man's blood shed for right,
The stirring breeze through the tree-tops
Is a last weak breath that was drawn,
For life comes and goes in the night hours
And we see it reflected at dawn—

The moon sailing high through the heavens,
Looks down on the world from above,
Down on the dark winding highways
Where she scatters her moonbeams of love.
She sees the sin of mankind.
In greed and hate when born,
Then she looks in the face of the sunrise
And we see it reflected at dawn.

SYMPATHY

I would pluck the crown from the dandelion's head
If it would bring comfort to your sick bed.
I would search the meadows for four leaf clover
And the babbling brook's bank that willows bend over.
I would gather cow-slips near the coolest stream
That is kissed and made warm by the sun's fair beam.
Fragrance of the flowers to you I would bring;
The song of a bird as it takes to the wing.
The odors that rise from a newly plowed field
That farmers have tilled for the harvest yield.
 White petals like snowflakes from a cherry tree.
 Honey bees humming merrily,
 Buttercups spread over a hill—
 Dancing, dancing and never still—
 Raindrops, fresh from the hanging eaves,
 Gilead-balm from poplar trees.
I would bring anything that the tongue could tell—
If only it would help you soon to be well.

IF HE WERE HERE

If he were here I know that he would say,
"I'm glad you're at work in your garden today."
I almost can hear his cheery laugh
As I dig and then hoe by the winding path.

If he were here I know that he would say,
"You're wearing a beautiful dress today."
He loved dainty dresses and new shoes,
And he bought more for me than I could use.

If he were here he'd look my garden o'er:
"Its better this year than it was before."
I water and tend it with constant care—
I remember he loved a rosebud in my hair.

THE TRUMPETER OF SPRING

Have you heard the trumpeter of spring?

Have you heard his call on the hills again?
Only to those do his clear tones ring,
Who've banished the winter's passion and pain,
Forgetting the cup with its bitter lees;
Who gather the tears they have hidden away,
And toss them like jewels upon the breeze,
To melt in the glint of an April day;
My heart, we have heard his trumpet's call—
It echoed today in the cardinal's note,
In the song of the brook by the meadow wall,
And, faint and sweet, in the bluebird's throat.
We have leaped, my heart, to the dear refrain,
For we've banished the winter's passion and pain.

Have you seen the trumpeter of spring?

Have you glimpsed his doublet of palest green?
His buskins of gold from the finch's wing?
The jaunty airs of the lad have you seen?
You must answer his tap on the window sill,
You must drink, deep, deep, in the April morn,
Of the tender beauty of sky and hill,
And laugh as you follow his winded horn.
My heart, we have glimpsed his golden shoes,
We have thrilled to his tap on the casement's ledge;
We have drunk, deep, deep, of the April dews,
And proffered to Beauty a deathless pledge.
So dance, my heart, to the sound of his horn,
And follow him far in the April morn.

FORGOTTEN SLABS IN TRINITY

Some dear soul rests under this sod
Unknown, all inscription erased.
Lines are blurred—but who is concerned
With a slab so long since placed?

Faded inscription, old tombstone that's left,
And you who lie under this sod,
Long since erased is all memory of you—
You're at rest, at home with God.

Many, like you, are forgotten—neglected;
Like many, your dear ones passed on.
Yours so lonely and dreary a grave
Since the ones you loved are gone.

Trinity! where hundreds lie buried
'Neath slabs well hidden from view.
Dear soul, you too, who rests under here,
Are someone whom somebody knew.

Once those slabs were of common wood
Exposed to the sun and weather.
Today they are made of marble and granite—
In this place they remain all together.

After all what does it matter
If a slab be of marble or wood?
You'll rest just as well under either
If it's you, not the slab, that is good.

God prepares you a place in Heaven:
He'll not question if slabs are of stone.
There you are welcome at any time—
If you merit it, Heaven's your home.

THE GARDEN

How wond'rously beautiful this assemblage!
In gorgeous green gowns and gay tinted hats,
Posing sedately on the soft black mats;
In the center, a sprite, graceful and gay,
Dancing enshrouded in silver spray;
The tall trees extending a protecting arm
In dreamy shadows to shield from harm,
Fearful lest the sun in unrivaled splendor,
Smile too brightly on frail youth most tender;
The dense hedge, picketing, lest some enter and mar,
The delicate and fragile beauty and departing leave
a scar.

What a great and glorious achievement!
Justly proud those hands should be
To share with fountain, plant, and tree;
Enraptured in this beauteous shrine,
This congregated loveliness of flower and vine—
Would that some accomplishment of mine,
Might reach as great perfection as thine,
The loveliness of flowers, inspiring kind,
Bearing love and cheer to all of mankind,—
Love revels in thought, error flutters away,
When you visit the garden on a sunshiny day.

THE SECRETS OF THE STARS

Far up above the Earth's green face,
In a Universe of endless space,
Are countless worlds to us unknown
That sparkle in an azure crown.

We wonder if we'll e'er be told
Of all the secrets that they hold—
Mysterious beacons of the night
That send to us their magic light.

Yet are they so dissimilar,
Although their light comes from afar,
To this strange world of smiles and tears
That has shone with them throughout the years?

Or are they mirrors of this sphere,
Reflecting what they see down here?
They have no wondrous secrets, then,
Except the ones we give to them.

TRAIN WHISTLES

Out of the haunting stillness of the night;
The vast and boundless blackness of the night,
I hear a shrill and lonely cry
That slowly fades into a distant echo.
Train whistles in the night—
Forboding symbols of the eternal query:
Whither are we riding
In this caravan of human souls?
Through the darkness that is life,
The mystifying, terrifying night,
Onward, onward into—what?
To light that pierces through the mists?
I wonder, as I strain my ears to hear
The dying notes upon the midnight atmosphere—
Where—where—where?

SEA GULLS

The wind is your ambient home.
Of a far away, bleak, barren shore
Your scream tells the rare foreign lore
And blends with the surf's hissing foam.

Look! Piercing the mist's pearly cloud
In graceful and swift-gliding flight
Your jubilant dash scatters light.
You alight then, haughty and proud.

Like souls that, forsaken in play,
Dread drab work that darkens their day
You spurn the dull urging of toil.
How light is your touch of the tide!
You rest, but you never will bide;
By bidding all beauty must spoil.

TAJ MAHAL

Of love a lofty monument
Behold the Taj's white marble lace.
Of glorious past the ornament,
Of love a lofty monument.
Though time the builder's pride has bent
Forth shines the Taj's unsullied grace.
Of love a lofty monument
Behold the Taj's white marble lace.

NIKKO

Thy temple bells so softly ring
As tired world to slumber goes,
And they of peace the message bring.
Thy temple bells so softly ring.
A cheerful, tranquil song they sing.
Release they bring from cares and woes.
Thy temple bells so softly ring
As tired world to slumber goes.

APOLOGIA

You could have made more perfect men
You had the greatest might;
But you gave them jealousy, greed, and lust,
And let them brawl and fight.

You gave them love, but also hate.
You made a spendthrift and a miser;
You fashioned many a foolish lout
And made many a man the wiser.

You had your chance to make them right
And yet you gave desire;
Charms—that could provoke or soothe
Love's earthly fire.

You did not leave them stupid beasts,
You gave them brains to think.
They with this knowledge, made of an herb
A stupifying drink.

You gave the glorious sunshine
And music of wind through the reeds.
But the night, and a blaring jazz-band
Are sufficient for their needs.

Their hands were meant lightly to touch;
But they do not use them so.
Instead they grasp, and crush, and break,
Or deal a heavy blow.

You gave them clear and steady eyes
Which now are filled with lust.
They build a mountain of their gold
And trample their hearts in its dust.

They have no God. They want no God.
In You no faith renewing . . .
O Father in Heaven, forgive them though
They know what they are doing.

FROM HAND TO MOUTH

Having received
From honest
Hands and
Gracious,—
 Salty bread,

Natural it is
To forget
How perfect,
How sustaining
Was froth
 In some other
 Hour.

Natural and
Not really hard
To fan with
Remembrance the
Lovely hour,

To stand a beggar,
Beholden to one
Whose bread
 Was beauty,—
And whose hands
 Were both.

DAY

'Twas flung at me all bright and early,
With mist of dew all sprinkled over.
And twinkling stars for magic cover.
The dawn of day in pristine glory,
The rose-pink golden ball of day,
Was flung from space of Universe.
For me to catch and hold as mine
Until the end of sun's last ray
Caught back my day for Paradise,
And left to me a night divine.

FEMININITY

The tricky spider all night long
Works on her web to make it strong,
And when her mate comes to her home
With good intent and courage bold,
She gets on him a strangle hold
And eats him up, both blood and bones.

TO TWILIGHT

The daylight dies, and twilight's misty trail
Is hanging low above the radiance of the sun,
To catch the splendor of the red and gold, far flung,
To mingle with the gray and purple of her veil,
For she is weaving draperies to cover hill and dale.
In every little hollow her priceless web is spun,
In the great dense forest, and where the streamlets run
The twilight drops her dusky robe so long and frail.

The calm unbroken silence of the hush twilight brings
Is but the prelude to the blessed sleep that comes
To the overburdened hearts of many weary ones,
When night enfolds us in forgetful dreams,
We never solve mysteries, nor understand the things
That sleep has tangled in the web of dreams—and
dreams—and dreams.

THERE WILL BE BEAUTY

There will be beauty eloquent and real
As long as somewhere there are eyes to see
Or minds to comprehend or hearts to feel,
There will be beauty in a high degree.

There will be unimagined loveliness
When there are no more stars or nebulae,
Beyond the scope of human minds to guess,
Of bards to dream or prophets to foresee.

When there is no more verdure on the earth,
No bloom on bush, no leaf on brake or tree,
Some unknown nature will be giving birth
To unknown splendor, unknown majesty.

There will be no more beauty only when
Souls die, or petrify, and only then.

SOMETIME AT SUNRISE

On moon-blanced nights with you I seem
The shelter of soft sleep to share;
I wake to find the dream a dream,
The brief joy fled and you not there.

Sometime at sunrise I'll awake
To find your arms encircling me,
Not then as now when bright dawns break,
Alone, alone, unfettered, free.

WISH

Needle-like the rain falls,
But silver-soft,
Opening the rose
To a rich, new hour. . .
So may teary grief come,
Needle-like,
But silver-soft,
Watering my heart's bright flower.

ONE WHO COMES AT EVENTIDE

I think when I am old a furtive shape
Will sit beside me at my fireless hearth,
Dabbled with blood from stumps of severed wrists,
And flecked with blackened bits of mouldy earth.

My blood ran fire when the deed was done;
Now it runs colder than the moon that shone
On shattered fields where dead men lay in heaps
Who could not hear a ravished daughter's moan.

(Dim through the bloody dawn on bitter winds
The throbbing of the distant guns was brought
When I reeled like a drunkard from the hut
That hid the horror my red hands had wrought.)

So now I fire my veins with stinging wine,
And hoard my youth as misers hug their gold,
Because I know what shape will come and sit
Beside my crumbling hearth—when I am old.

TO A WOMAN

Though fathoms deep you sink me in the mould,
Locked in with thick-lapped lead and bolted wood,
Yet rest not easy in your lover's arms;
Let him beware to stand where I have stood.

I shall not fail to burst my ebon case,
And thrust aside the clods with fingers red:
Your blood shall turn to ice to see my face
Look from the shadows on your midnight bed.

To face the dead, *he*, too, shall wake in vain,
My fingers at his throat, your scream his knell;
He will not see me tear you from your bed,
And drag you by your golden hair to Hell.

SHADOWS

The evening shadows creep
Like grey cloaked little elves,
Who softly, softly weep
And whisper 'mongst themselves.
They steal along perplexed
As feathers blown to west,
And always leave me vexed
For object of their quest.

rites

You would bring a pink rose,
Whispering low you said,
And lay it on my quiet heart
If I were dead.

I would bring a red rose,
Flaming with desire,
Oh, surely your still heart would stir
Beneath its fire!

INDISCRETION

We stirred a meager warmth
When chilling winds blew harsh,
Placed kindling on the fire
Knowing drouth was on the marsh.

Our hearts were beating light
As wind-blown thistledown
For lovely shown the red
Against the earth's dull brown.

But, oh—the flames ran high
And over the fields in turn
Smoldered the ashes of things
That were not ours to burn!

LIFE

There's lots of life
To learn—
But I am a willing student.
I burn
Both candle ends brightly
To light
This life that I must learn.

FOG

Fog! Fog!
On my face
Like cold drippings
From wet gloves—
Subtly disturbing
As remembrance
Of past loves.

CHANGE

Trickling streams
Of coolness
And bright red
Oaken leaves
Show that summer's
Leaving—
And it's whispered
By the trees.
The hills are turning ashen—
They fear the coldness much,
And all around
The world
Is shrinking
From winter's touch.

WEeping WILLOW IN POTOMAC PARK

Femininity, Princess,
In your graceful loveliness,
Soul of rhythm in your wands
Tempting water with your hands.
When Potomac tries to kiss
Waving does not give him bliss.
Tide is caused by, I confess,
Water trying to caress
Finger tips of Weeping Willow,
Temptress to Potomac billow.

WANDERLUST

Spring is here; it's time for roaming;
Water in the brook is gleaming;
Flowers in the woods are smiling;
Now's the time to do some dreaming!
Briar harps and water foaming
Furnish music so beguiling.

PERCEPTION

(To President Roosevelt's New Deal)

Do you know the reason of this terrible unrest,
Poverty amidst the wealth, this lack of happiness?
Is it not a setting up of self apart from God?
Living in God's presence teaches nothingness of self.
Recognize no self apart from man's true Father, God.
Make your body, make your mind His perfect instruments.

God is omnipresent, Spiritual man, His only Son,
Is the Father, manifested. Greed and lust and hate
Cause this world's unhappiness and man his great mistakes.

Minding my own business does not tend to make me see
Motes in neighbors' eyes when many beams remain in
me.

Living in God's presence teaches nothingness of self.

EVENING

Like a curtain after the applause,
Night pulled a grey cloud—
Across a vivid sunset.

BROKEN FRIENDSHIP

I went quietly
While you were still seated,
Sipping your wine.
I went quietly
And closed the door.
I heard your laughter
Echo through the hall,
And so I went.
Your weary brain,
Remembers my name,
You call, too late—
I was already down the hill,
On my way home.

OUR BLOCK

Our world is so beautiful
The little street narrowly curbed,
The houses leaning on one another.
The trees sheltering the walk.
The bark of a dog, the gurgle of a child.
Somebody's kid running down the block,
The sunlight shining on his hair.
Patches of sunlight everywhere.
A bird singing in a bush,
A women humming over her wash.
A day glides by—weary men at night,
Sit on porches and smoke their pipes.
The sun goes down, night glides on.
Lamps shine in the windows
Many people come home.

TENTING ON THE SHORE

They tell me that I am growing old.
My tent may be, as the years unfold—
But I have scarcely begun to live!
My accusers I freely forgive.

They tell me that I am growing old.
Such an assertion is very bold!
I am a youth tenting on the shore—
And shall be even when the tent is no more.

They tell me that I am growing old.
This again and again I am told,
But Methuselah's was a youthful soul
Though he saw a full millennium roll!

They tell me that I am growing old—
As though I were something bought or sold!
I am tenting on a pebbled shore,
Though the frail tent, anon, I shall give o'er.

Life is not measured by years below,
But by shallow stream or ocean flow:
Long may we live and but little do!
But we may do much though our years be few.

TO A CARDINAL

Oh, precious bird in gay attire,
Why would one blight your heart's desire
To perch on point of highest tree,
And sing your song so light and free—
A song that thrilled sad hearts to hear.
'Twas heard by all, both far and near:
"Good cheer! Good cheer! Good cheer!"

Though tragedy befell your lot
Your song will never be forgot.
Be dark and drear the day, or bright,
From early dawn unto the night;
From every tree top I still hear
Your voice in accents loud and clear:
"Good cheer! Good cheer! Good cheer!"

JOY OF COMING HOME

There's much delight in travel,
Strange sights are grand to see;
It fills desire and longing,
It sets emotions free.
But when the journey's ended,
When you have ceased to roam,
The greatest thrill of all will come
When you're returning home.

For as the home draws nearer
The heartbeats quicker grow;
Your smile will beam its brightest—
And you will ever know
That of all the scenes of grandeur,
On land or on the foam,
There's naught that gives you so much joy
As the sight of your own home.

PERSPECTIVE

I haven't want of much today,
As life thus far has measured naught
More than the little touching clay
Of frozen dust and withered thought.

If such were mine a whole life through
And burning tears are cleansed of sin,
Might shadow length be mossy hue
As cast between the never-end?

The subtle light and hope beyond
Is food for those to follow after;
Awakened soul begins the song
That I may reach eternal laughter.

A GLIMPSE

Your whisper
Came to me at dawn.
I felt nothing,
Yet sound could not tempt
My ears
Unless your own lips
Had blown my way
The true delight of memory,
Then warm sun rays
Beamed golden
Upon the window;
I know that day
Had brought reality,
And sharpened my dream.

BY DIFFERENT ROADS

She has the scorn of her prosaic race
For dreams and those who dream them, for the mind
Which through a printed page can leave behind
Its daily world for one of deeper grace.
She says it wastes time; foolishness indeed,
With things to *do*, for folks to sit and read!

Her windows overrun with thrifty plants:
Begonia, narcissus, nicotine;
She wipes their leaves to bring a glossy sheen
And coaxes them to great luxuriance.
"A lot of work," she says, "but I do think
Plants are so pretty. Did you see my pink?"

BALANCE

Some day, when all I love are lost and gone,
It may be I shall also lose the sense
Of an ironic fortune's imminence,
So that the rapture of a lilac dawn
Will bring no thought of Powers to appease;
So I am able to meet joy again
Without a catch of breath against the pain
Which I have grown to think must follow ease.

For then, when all I love are gone and lost,
I shall not be afraid of anything,
Not life nor death; I shall not count the cost
Of each high mood, but carelessly shall fling
Fear into all-supreme delight. Fate's toll
For that undoubtedly will be my soul.

MY RED, RED ROSE

I've guessed who you are, my red, red rose,
With your long, gaunt arms, and gaunter fingers.
Each finger's tipped as the red blood flows,
Then gathers in drops, and stops and lingers.

There's naught can wash the red away;
By night—by day—it grows and grows;
It grows and grows as flowers may,
Till each finger shows a red, red rose.

Lo! from this rose so sweetly blowing,
There comes the breath of Araby.
My lady's tears may now cease flowing;
Penance is done right royally.

IF I WERE PAGAN

If I were pagan, I would live in a tree.
Naiads and Dryads my guests would be.
The topmost branches would be our top floor,
Where we'd sit and talk of mythical lore.
Naiads, with glee, great stories would tell,
Of clear, rambling streams in their mossy dell.

If I were pagan, I'd worship the wind,
(His name depends upon the mood he's in).
Gentle zephyr'd caress us and tousle our hair,
Wafting strains Aeolian on the balmy air.
To stern Boreas, deep homage I'd pay,
Though he shook my tree till the roots gave way.

I'd cast away fear and laugh in his face,
Though Naiads and Dryads fled the place.
I'd worship the wind whosoever he be,
If I were pagan and lived in a tree.

THE OCEAN TRAMP

Vagabond! Where are you bound?
Tramp of the Western Ocean,
With your reeking, slimey sides of drab,
Broken only by scattering patches
Of red lead, vivid and glaring;
Superstructure, bridge, and forecastle,
Deckhouse, lifeboats, portholes, poop,
Smudged and grimy from the oil and soot
Of Cardiff, Norfolk, Galveston, Hong Kong,
Belching forth from funnel mouth.

What nation fair is mother to your ensign
That oozes through the scented breeze?
Tattered, ravelled, greasy, detestable rag,
Flaunted from the taffrail staff.
For all I know it is the same
As Kidd from the Jolly Roger raised,
Except for lack of Skull and Bones.
These instead lie hidden in the depths
Of your own self;
Stinking, sweating, swearing, ever toiling
At shovel, barrow, hoe, and poker;
Swollen-eyed, hollow-cheeked, men of red
In the furnaces' glare,
Yellow and black as they lie on deck
Gasping and choking down
Mouthfuls of undefiled air.

Vagabond! Where are you bound,
Rolling and reeling and staggering thus?
The gray-green waves hesitate to lash your sloppy
sides.
They flee before your bellied bow
In two diverging lines of foam,
Meeting far astern to rant
At your uncleanness.

THE GLORIOUS CHRISTMAS TREE

What a happy and joyous throng we are as we gather
 Around the Christmas tree
To find what Santa Claus has left to increase our glad-
 ness.

We can scarcely keep in restraint our impatience
So eager are we to see what each package
 May contain.

But do we remember what event the day commem-
 orates?

Can we tell the holy incident?

“It was night. The shepherds were watching their flocks
When suddenly a bright and glorious light surrounded
 them.

They were afraid; and an angel came to them and said:
‘Fear not: for, behold, I bring you glad tidings, of
 great joy
Which shall be for all people.’

“‘For unto you is born this day, in the city of David,
 A Saviour, which is Christ, the Lord;
And this shall be a sign unto you: ye shall find
The babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a
 manger.’

Then, suddenly, there appeared with the angel a mul-
 titude

Of the heavenly host, praising God and saying,
‘Glory to God in the highest, and on earth, peace—
 Good will toward men.’ ”

Would that Christmas might last the entire year—
 How much brighter the world would be!
How much brighter and happier our lives would be.
How we long for a life of continuous peace and joy
With no wars or troubles to plague us. God grant that
 Time may arrive very soon.

CONDESCENSION

The good Lord, I fear,
Was not minding His business
When He turned out
My excuse for a face;
But all thanks to Him—
In the general dizziness
He gave me for beauty
A passion so great
That I shall excuse Him—in case.

QUEST

This quest for perfection
Is hard on a person,
To put it quite mildly—
It sets one a-cursin',
To say nothing of others
With whom I've to live—
Poor satisfied devils,
They've nothing to give!

CRITICISM

Such cruel delight
A critic can take—
So hard to spin,
So easy to break—
This gossamer web of dreams.

BEAUTY

There are some things
Too beautiful for words—
They pierce the heart
As keen-edged swords.
A lover's look—a baby's touch,
Exquisite music—all of such
Can be translated by so few;
The rest—
These things of beauty die.

VALLEY FORGE IN SPRING

Where once brave bugles echoed clear
Across bare fields and hills o'erlaid
With snow, woodthrushes pipe their cheer
From twigs with bursting buds arrayed.

Amid ephemeral beauty white,
Pink dogwood blossoms gently blow
To sanctify the foeless fight,
Immortal tracks across the snow.

THE AVERAGE MAN

The average man, how curst is he,
Who has no flaming fancy free
To turn bound night to winging day;
Reduce his work that he may play;
Reveal his soul for such there be
In everyone. Let mortal clay
Be turned to dust, be blown away
By swift wing-beats of thoughts which flee
The average man.
Let lovely dreams and imagery
Come waft me o'er the milling sea
Of unrevealed souls. I pray
To soar beyond the norm! Oh, may
This curse of curses abandon me,
The average man!

THE RESTORED LOVER

When at last he returned,
She was not pleased.
Having worn so long
Sorrow's silver-grey cloak
She feared happiness
Would not become her.

GRISELDA

They call me patient.
And you, in your security,
Year after year have brought me
Fresh pain.
Trampled upon my pride
Until it is one with the dust,
And my heart is a twisted,
Bitter thing.
You praise my meekness,
Nor guess how many thousand times
I have dreamed of a knife dark with
Your blood.

SMALL-TOWN WIDOW

The day after he died
She bought a new dress
Of flaring crimson.
The tongues of the neighbors
Clacked busily
Destroying her between
Tea and dinner.
They forgot—or never knew—
How he had loved red.

THE PRICE

Life has given me naught!
All I have has been dearly bought!
Some pay with wealth,
Some with stealth,
Some with smiles
To help climb the weary miles.
Life has given me naught
All I have has been dearly bought!

LOVERS

One lover comes
The other goes!
Perhaps they would not be foes,
If the one that comes
Knew why the other goes!

WALKS IN THE PALE MOONLIGHT

Walks in the pale moonlight,
That lead to Heaven's bliss,
Then the smouldering ashes
Drifted into dust!

VOWS

Vows build castles,
Man the instigator
Tears them down!
Women gives her heart's blood
To nurse the aspiration.
Man drains until
The fount is dry
And then the castles crumble!
Like "Aladdin's Mists."

ATLANTES

Rows of trees along horizons low,
Carrying the cornice of the sky,
Tall Atlantes—where wild roses grow,
Gypsies sometimes look at you—and sigh.

GOLD

Mammon
Stood admiring
Heaven's golden pavement.
God foresaw how mortals would be
Tempted.

MEDIEVAL TOWN

You were
As picturesque
And far more prophetic
Than the castle standing above
Your walls.

SERFDOM

Art is
A feudal lord
Exacting dues that I,
Poor serf, shall never be able
To pay.

THE PROMISE

Man's small
Conceit once feared
The power of rain. And then
The first apostle to the earth
Appeared.

STRANGE ALBATROSS

What wandering albatross spreads wings today
Across the lonely sea of my torn heart?
Too motionless these wings now throb their way
Above these seas and rend my soul apart.
Oh lonely wandering thing of southern seas,
Is there no wave to cradle you tonight?
Oh love, too well compared to one of these
Across my heart and soul you take your flight.

It is too strange a spell you hold so all
Securely over me, too silently
You move your solitary way across
My heart that feels the deep vibrations fall
From your spread wings skimming above the sea.
How singular this course of albatross!

UNBITTED FOAL

When I at last shall take my highmost fling
Shall I be like some free, unbitted foal
To bound across high heaven's star-marked scroll
As one who never knew a bridling.
Graze where a vast eternal prairie whirs?
I then forget the taste of manger straw?
My flanks no longer feel the gouge of spurs,
Nor I feel tugging reins at my chafed jaw?

Oh let me then unhindered nightly roam,
Forgetting measured ways of all this past,
Meet swift mustangs on broad ethereal plains
That too have shed the bit that once their foam—
Chafed mouths endured; together flash our manes
Agleam through aging glory, freed at last!

HERMITAGE

Until today I've always spent
Money, to my heart's content,
With little thought to means or gain,
Giving everything in vain.

But times have changed, I remain hid
And ponder o'er what I did;
And despise my present state;
But then, is it now too late?

Had I known how things would turn out,
Rest assured there'd be no doubt
In my mind. But things did not wait—
And now I long for them—too late.

ODE TO DAWN

What manner of man is this,
Who dreads the coming dawn!
Is he of the idle rich
To whom the day is pawn?
Or is he of the other class,
Who fears the coming hour
When hunger brings angry thoughts
To minds grown weak and sour?

Why bother for the morrow?
The rich care naught for it,
The poor spell it as sorrow,
And bear it just with grit.

ODE TO A FORGOTTEN GRAVEYARD

Blades of grass, wave triumphant
Bleached headstones crazily tipped
Brown earth, rolling, bursting,
Clustered paths tumbleweed blocking
Nodding trees sighing sadly
Broken gates creak in lonely mourning
Fences stripped of paint, rotting slowly
Rock of grey cluster once smooth lawn
Leaves, fallen in disintregating agony.
Memories generations old, becoming disingenuous
Spirits hover round with evil toothless grin
A world passing in happy whirl, without
 thought,
of beautiful women who once held charm and
 grace
of gentle men once courageous and clean
of little children, lambs of God . . . romping, loving,
 learning . . .
Whipped away with magic flow with no remem-
 brance,
to the land of never, never
Forgotten.

.

! ! ! ! !

THE VANISHED WOOD-NYMPH

With hands like yellowed ivory, she stood,
Still as the night, and illumined the trees
With emerald eyes; while the green wood,
With rustling leaves, caressed her alabaster knees.

A veil of woven butterfly wings
Wrapped her white and graceful limbs;
And on her russet hair, as on gossamer strings,
Moonlight played its golden whims.

Even the blind could tell the place
Where among the boughs she hearkened;
For a swallow's twitter, weird with grace,
Led when vision darkened.

The sighing wind and the linnet's throat
Took up her fallen sighs;
And gay-plumed birds, of sweetest note,
Dropped them in the skies.

Her days she spent in solitude,
And her nights in longing;
Lonely men, who knew her mood,
Her charmed haunts were thronging.

But now the wood is cleared,
And the leafy boughs are hewn
Where, among the boughs that shimmered weird,
She breathed her elfin tune.

Lonely men now look in vain
For her robe of butterflies;
Vanished is the glimmering lane
Lit by her emerald eyes.

'Tis rumored that she fled
From her abode of sylvan art,
To hover in some weary head,
And nestle in his heart.

A GARDEN OF DELIGHT

Misty stars trick silver bars of midnight skies,
A ruby sun glorifies day with emotional sighs,
Aurora swathed in roseate colors awakens fresh dawn
Striking her golden cymbals, tuning the birds' song.
Field flowers bow with smiles wafting incense breath
As the sunrise and happy morn have met.
Chaste Nature is resplendant in tissuous charm-lure
Reflecting delicate sky-pastel tinsels with harmonizing
 azure.
Unbridled blazing beauties like giddy sunbeams siren-
 izing,
The bursting buds into blossoms gayly appear, tantal-
 izing
With happy mood-masses of confused threaded mem-
 ories,
Preying with a color-dream phantasm of symphonies
Like a drop of perfume from myth-flowers
Nestling in fragrant garlanded arches of fairy bowers.
Life walks entrancingly in a garden of delight
Joyously with trust sublime as in ordained plight.

THE MELODIES OF JOY

A redolent rhythm of loveliness settles everywhere
Chanting a melodious song in the air
With a crimson glow enrapturing the heart
A joy makes the world glad apart
From an inky sky. Gleams of happiness
In rainbow aroma of inborn sweetened bliss,
Hope in tune—impulses taking fancy shapes
Like a new star self-illuminous, pregnates
The breath of Nature with creation's ideals,
Tinging the spirit of life, courageously reveals,
Radiates in jubilant ecstasy, untold aspirations
With the blossoming anew of hidden inspirations
Surging through the power-bridge of gladness,
Spanning the laughing waters of joy-madness.

MULBERRIES

I plant mulberries.
Birds in legions
Track these regions
In camaraderies;
Friendly and mad,
Saucy and glad,
Birds sing in the mulberry trees;
Birds in lacquered crimson coats,
From whose wine-refreshed throats
Songs vermilion heady-sweet
Intoxicate the breeze,
Intoxicate the heat;
Blue and green songs of confusion,
Yellow rhapsodied illusion,
Brown songs, white songs in a spray;
Fire works shooting at the day,
Sky rocket and rainbow songs,
Glass and silver, copper gongs,
Deluged air of minstrelsies,
Carnival without a pause
Of vocal mountebanks, because
I plant mulberries.

MISER

She hoards her grief,
Caresses it,
As guarded fief
She dresses it.

She cherishes in solitude
The mourning mood.
Obsessed, she would dispute
Joy as a substitute.

BLIND

Into the tortured blackness of my gloom
There comes no dawning hope of sun to shine
And make the dank ground sweet, in this, my tomb.
The rotting bodies of old thoughts of mine
And those of other people, conned by me,
Lie mouldering thick about my inert brain.
The myriad footsteps of the crowds that see,
Along the pavement beat and beat again.

Poor idiots, not knowing that tomorrow
Their laughter may be stilled, and all the earth
For them be crowded with the ghosts of sorrow—
One wraith I know—black haired with eyes of mirth—
—Oh, thank you for the nickel, gentle lady—
You may be a haughty dame, or “Judy O’Grady.”

BARNABY RUDGE

I have prisoned the crescent moon at last,
In the bottom of the well.
The shadows are running by me fast,
Did you know the wind wove a spell?

The trees are angry, they shake and dip,
But they cannot follow on.
They cannot follow to London, Grip,
But we will be there before dawn.

The wild men howl and tramp in the mud—
Here’s a banner as black as a bat.
Oh—my gallant feather is draggled in blood!
Mother I cannot bear that.

THE GREATEST THING IN THE WORLD

More potent e'en than Circe's spell
It haunts all corners of the earth,
Makes each one seem a Goddess of the Shell,
Lifts up the laden heart to mirth.

That which when given, returns tenfold
To the one who lavishly gives.
It cannot be bartered, or even sold—
Yet without it none truly lives.

It stays the hand of the Reaper,
It calms life's stormy sea,
It makes the gall of life somewhat sweeter—
Now have you guessed my mystery?

Your worldly cares are lighter,
Your storm clouds all turn blue.
The sun shines just a little brighter
When the one you love, loves you.

"Love is the force that moves the world,"
Old and young declare it.
Very often we forget the word:
"Each one must give to share it."

THE SCANDAL-MONGERS

They with their painted tongues must rise
Naked at the trumpets' blast
When all their winds of sick surmise
And bewildering mists roll past.

What then is their pride and their fertile breath
When every song they've sung
Has left on their breath the stench of death
And a soul empaled on their tongue.

THE HOLY-MEN

They hide in the fens and forests.
They dwell in a nether night.
They babble of our iniquity
But turn their backs to light.

They never walk the thorny paths.
They fly from us like elves.
A terrible terror is on them—they
Might see themselves!

THE SCHOONER

The helm is lashed; the sails rolled;
The stretch of bare deck is quiet.
And sharp eyed men with mouths of gold
Blaspheme to buy it.

Hid in a churchyard a tombstone glares,
"Lost to the windy waves."
And the shivering sexton starts and swears
At the singing in the graves!

CIMMERIAN WINGS

A flitter-mouse: *futility*;
Again it circles through the dark,
Beating its fingered wings at me
Till thoughts of mine are prone and stark.

Beneath the sun, Cimmerian wings
Quiescent hide till day is blurred;
Before the sun, my spirit flings
The somber, melancholy word.

LITTLE POPLARS

My square of silver turf is pointed
With naked poplar trees;
Immaculate striplings primly jointed

And little virgins chastely tender
Are even such as these
Before their Eden of surrender.

Poplars with hearts red-stemmed resemble
Lovers who would please,
Like lovers shining yet atremble.

SONG OF WINGS

The magic of wings
Is the essence of things:
Of rocks and dust,
Iron and rust,
Of the flowering plum,
And rarities from
Forgotten lands;
Of platinum sands,
The water's foam,
Earth's pregnant loam,
Of youth and age,
Of love and rage,
Of swarms of us. . .
Miraculous!

CARILLON AT MALINES

Have you ever heard the ringing
Of the chimes at old Malines
In the magic of the mellow evening light?
Have you heard the silvery chiming
Of the bells so softly rhyming
As the carillon is sounding on the night?

They are ringing, gently ringing,
Fairy messages are winging
Like the music of the angels
Falling on my listening ear.
They are ringing, gently ringing
Like a choir of song-birds singing
As the little bells are flinging
Out their anthem sweet and clear.

But a ruder note is sounding
With a noise of doleful pounding,
Like a sound of evil portent
And my heart is filled with fear;
They are clanging, loudly clanging,
The great bells are harshly banging
Like the din of anvils whanging
Out their chorus far and near.

Thus my fancy swiftly straying
While the carillon was playing,
I stood spell-bound by the music
All forgetful of the hour,
Till at last my trance was broken,
Though no word to me was spoken,
By the last melodious token
From the dark cathedral tower.

A POEM SPEAKS TO AN EDITOR

I've traveled round this country thrice;
I've been in cities large and small.
Name any publisher in the States,
I'm sure I've met them all.

So, sir, when you are reading me,
Think not I need correction.
Have pity on a tired poem;
Forget the cursed rejection!

FOOL

Complaint-laden atmosphere;
Not a friend around me here;
Cutting words upon my ear—
And I live
In this world of heavy pain,
Too much sun, and too much rain;
Too much loss, and too much gain;
I must complain.
Too much hunger; too much grain;
Too much mountain; too much plain;
Too much heart, and not much brain!
I must complain.

Incense-laden atmosphere;
Sweet smelling blossoms around me here;
A soft and gentle funeral bier;
I am dead.
To sleep within the Earth forever
Is not a thing for which I care.
Too much dirt and time to spare.
I still complain.
Too much quiet; too much rest;
Too much thought to be expressed
Of too much sin to be confessed.
So, I complain.

TAHITIAN GHOST FLOWER

Today a native brought a lei. . .
The lovely, ivory Ti-pan'-i-e,
Thick, soft petals, cream and gold,
Curled back from fragil cups
That hold wells of fragrance
In their folds.

Ti-pan'-i-e,
Tahitians say,
Walks with a ghost that cries and wails,
A Tu'-pa-pah of forest trails.
And that is the reason
Tahitians say,
That only in the light of day,
These lovely, fragrant
Cream gold flowers,
May be worn in sunlight hours.

REMEMBRANCE

I have given my heart to you
In thought. . . .
But shadows stand between us;
Tender and deep is the love that you wrought,
Strong and true as the clarion call
Of wild, grey geese
On a northern breeze,
Winging their way into Southern Seas.
Remember then, when wild geese fly,
When the Buffalo Trail is in the sky,
When silver flashes on the reef,
When coral sands
Like shining bands
Of ivory cream,
Wait for you there
In starlight's gleam,
Remember then. . . . my hand in yours
Was not a dream.

DREAMS

Dream on—dream on, my blue, my brown-eyed lads;
Dream morning, noon, and night! Your dreams are
sure,
For dreams of good, of ill, e'en all endure!
Since dreams have power to make both glad and sad,
Then always when you dream, of this be sure:
That they are good, are pure—constructive, right!
Not dreams that do debase, destructive quite.
For dreams are always filled with magic lure.
Remember when, always, to-day, to dream
The truth: unto the pure, all things are pure.
And e'en in world of chaos, of strife, a gleam
Of radiant light shines always bright for all
Who have by will, their dreams in guarded hall.
Dream on—dream on! These dreams guard well, I do
adjure!

HUMANITY

The human, pulsing, beating, restless throng,
Earth's spawn from all the restless ages flung,
Advance, retreat, evolve, revolve, among
The flora, fauna here, earth, magnet strong!
From whence, wherefore and whither bent,
We would of them inquire. Would answer true of all
Be this: quest of desire? If so, the call
Still comes, will come, until desire is spent
And spirit fine in all doth find the way:
Contrition strong, submission meek of self,
And from the pulsing, beating, restless throng
Ascends both loud and long, a breath of song
In tune with Infinite creative ray
Of thought divine and all delight in wealth!

UNDISCOVERED

The secrets of the ocean
Hidden, deep, mysterious are;
But secrets of the soul
Encompass, fly beyond each star.

DIRGE

Sad tidings came from one we love,
That his dear friend, and ours, had passed
To wond'rous realms beyond the stars
Where faithful ones find true repast.
His mortal home, of earth now claimed,
Was borne to the Place of Prayer and Praise;
Solemn thoughts, en route, were ours
And heavy hearts that none could raise,
Save Jesus Christ, the Holy Ghost,
Or God, in Whom each heart should trust.

Inside the portals of this Place
We felt, as ne'er before, the grace,
The pow'r and justice of the Lord,
That would each willing soul embrace.
Those who know the trials of grief,
The agony of soul to tears,
The questions awsome death propounds
To test our faith, or bring us fears,
Will wonder not these pains decrease
In thoughts of promised joy and peace.

Thus consoled, we journeyed forth
Where all have final sleep and rest,
The peace of which shows us a way
To lighten tasks, direct each quest.
The service o'er, we would remain
To sense the bliss of heav'nly life,
The call of love, conceived of love,
A gem untouched by earthly strife—
Then evermore our song shall be,
O Death, where is thy victory?

SHADOWS

The gentle swishing of a sombre stream,
The rounded moon of burnished brass becomes.
A molten melody from somewhere hums
And lulls itself into an endless dream.
The lonely stars send forth their flick'ring beam
And ope and close their ever-peering eyes;
A painted beetle drones and wearily flies
To where the blossoms rest beside the stream.

And who is there among the sons of men,
Who looks on these,—the fingertips of power,
Pulsing on the barren path he's trod,—
A-winding through the woods or o'er the fen,
A-toiling upward where the mountains tower,—
Has not there seen the shadows of a God?

GAUTAMA BUDDHA

"All life is sorrow: O, how blind the fool
Who gorges self on vain, elusive joys,
Who cushions life with Mara's gilded toys—
The pleasures of a lifeless, listless pool.
What! know'st thou not—from ignorance is sprung
The guileless gurgle of the new-born babe
Who, shackled by the chains of brute desire,
Leaps up, decays and withers ere he's young?
Let passion be unknown to you, nor joys,
Nor pinch of senses—ought of such desire—
The life within is of an holier fire,—
That ecstasy of thought, where nought annoys,
A dream, a trance, a puffing of the flame
That opes to view Nirvana's fertile plain."

IN MY OWN IMAGE

In my own image I bore you:
The hail beat upon my head;
The heat warmed my breast,
Sorrow covered my flesh;
Mighty winds swept my soul.
I have drunk from cups of torture
And tasted drops of triumph.

In my own image I bore you—
A slave to earth.

So in my youth I had spoken.
So in my youth I had reproached myself.
I, my son's measure line,
The base for his flight,
Kept towering. . . .

Now as a bird before its winter flight,
Now as a bee with its honey gathered,
I watch my child in the deep vastness of the air
Gallantly braving the wind,
Passionately flying.

Motors of a plane. . . .
In the sky the sun and shadow interchange.
Will my child know only bits of shadow
And immensity of sun?
Will he taste only drops of torture
And drink great cups of triumph?

He is stronger than I have ever been
And braver;
He has broken my measure line
And reaches upward . . . upward.

THE GOLDEN PRESENT

The dew in the garden shines, dear,
As it has shone before;
But the beauty of this morn, dear,
Shall quickly be no more.

The rarest roses bloom, dear,
As in the springs gone by;
But the fragrance of this morn, dear,
Shall swiftly faint and die.

Just hear the linnet's joy, dear,
Oft has he sung the same;
But the music of this morn, dear,
Shall soon be but a name.

Time and the hour flee, dear,
As they have fled of yore;
But the golden present lives, dear,
Has past or future more!

WHO KNOWS SAND-PAINTINGS

Down in a Hopi kiva on the floor
Of rough gray flags, priests weave with sandy thread
Unique designs in green, blue, yellow, red,—
On russet ground between the altar and door;
War, Thunder, Life,—gods Indians adore—
Stare hard upon the work with rigid head;
Splendid the rug when done, the last grains spread!
Then dance and drum and song,—a weird uproar!

Two ceremonies never are the same;
The sketch must be complete and wiped away
Ere sunset. But is any purpose here?
Line, color, form, strange rite,—I find no aim!
Soft! Indians see the meaning clear as day:
Evils depart, pains go and joys draw near.

THE COURSE

My dearest, trust me!! I may err and fail
In many ways, through mere humanity,
And draw a tide of precious tears from thee,
And make thy heart with apprehension quail.
These are the voyagers cares. Our ship must sail
A hundred ways to windward and to lee,
Before the harbor where we fain would be
Flashes its light, and answers to our hail.
But I am faithful as the stars above,
By which I steer. Though almost blind I cannot see;
For tears of loneliness for thee are blinding me.
My fixed vision from their guidance shall not rove;
Or if these lights in stormy clouds that be
Towards the same point my constant course shall key,
It shall be gained, led by the magnet of my love.

'TIS ALL ANY OF US ACCOMPLISH

A stage, we enter, loud applause.
We dance, whirl, bend, talk, joke.
Play our bit to make man laugh.
It ends, a stage, we exit.
Soft applause and flowers in our dressing room,
'Tis all any of us accomplish.

NIGHT THOUGHT

The river beckons warm and comforting.
The soothing wind shoves me into her arms—
No—stop—I cannot ever stop to rest.
I must be on—I have many things to do
Ere I lay down to sleep. He must be made
Happy like the gurgling stream that
Slips into the arms of its lover—the river.
Yet, I have many things to do, ere I return.

SHATTERED

Last night I dreamed you were a silver swan,
Your ruffled beauty etched against the moon,
And I the purple of a deep lagoon
On which you glided toward the waiting dawn.
What ecstasy to have you lean upon
Me lightly, very lightly, while the croon
Of crickets came across the dark. . . I swoon,
Remembering how soft your breast, how wan!

Alas, I woke to lose the purple stir
Of lilies in a room grown strangely still.
I tried to catch again the silver gleam
That had been you, the even, ebbing whirl
Of motion that went through me like a thrill;
But who can hold the fragments of a dream?

THE DAWN IS STILL

The dawn is still, no flash of bird is bringing
A syllable of mirth, no laughing spill
Of water where the silver tide is swinging—
The dawn is still.

It is as if I walked upon a hill
With God before the birth of sound, while clinging
Night unpinned the stars that held her frill.

I seem to feel my very spirit winging
Through space without the aid of wish or will.
Too soon the bells of commerce will be ringing—
The dawn is still.

SOUTHERN JUSTICE

Cold, iron, spiral steps led
down through the dank, dread gloom;
there were little pools of red
and a sticky sweetness in the room.
A negro lay upon the bed,
his chest was wet with sweat,
the blood oozed from his head.
A voice said: *let the jet
bleed—he will soon be dead.*

SELF SUFFICIENCY

I thought: *Are we the weakest link in this*
And I went out into the cold night air
And found a warmth and fragrant sweetness there—
That stopped the nervous twitching of my toes
Sated my desires and made light of all my woes.
*is it a true set of values that we miss
where is the pathway, the key to the gate*
My eyes absorbed with one sweeping gaze
All the dots, all the discs, the crescent haze;
The velvet dewy grass on which I tread
Does not give up and die, but sprouts instead.
how can I understand how long must I wait
A tree is satisfied with isolation,
Without the comradeship of contemplation.

YESTERDAY FOREVER

Swift wheels of yesterday are still,
So, too, the clatter of the mill;
Its weavers hopeless, bent and wan
From silent looms are ever gone.
But, on the mighty river flows,
It constant comes, it ceaseless goes.

Time tears the monuments of men
And hurls them back to dust again
For grinding into mouldy earth,
Of artless form, of nothing worth.
There lies the skill of man, undone,
And, endless ages but begun.

Backward the clock of time is turned,
Some bridges never can be burned;
For, everything which is to-day
Has come to us a long, long way
From wrecks prone lying through the years,
Wrought then of human blood and tears.

There is one hope,—the faith of Him
Whose was the impulse, was the whim
To raise a sanctum for his fane,
Built not of stone and steeple, vain.
Great castles back to earth decay,
Their moted waters flow away.

PRECIOUS BABY MINE

Oh, precious little baby dear!
Lump of gold—
Your loving mother watches near
To enfold
You in my arms when day is done,
And cuddle you, my little One!
So do not pine—
 Oh, heart of me!
 Oh, part of me!
 Precious baby mine!

Your tender eyes of deepest brown
Dance with glee—
A glimpse of Heaven smiling down,
Down at me.
Oh, wondrous joy at setting sun
To hold you close, my Little One!
So pure and fine—
 Oh, heart of me!
 Oh, part of me!
 Precious baby mine!

THE SONNET

Here is sufficient space for truth to walk,
Down fourteen rigid aisles of five feet each,
For governed thus discreetly, she may talk
With beauty, who will glorify truth's speech
Until she need not chafe at the restraint
Of "Thus far and no farther," having learned
That thought which wanders widest may grow faint
For lack of discipline which could have turned
Ambition to achievement. Gladly then
Shall truth obey the limits of the law,
Content to share the company of men
Who took this strictest passage, and foresaw
The consummation that defends the course:
Truth chastened into majesty and force.

IN A DOWN TOWN PARK

These rooted trees rebuke the rootless breed,
Borne here by casual wind of circumstance;
The flotsam and the jetsam spurned by chance,
Pawns which belie the life that guaranteed
Their value and their valor. Now they feed
And fatten on inert insouciance.
Their bitter words and gestures but enhance
The spirit's nakedness, the heart's vast need.

Hulks now, these men were born for nobler things.
Their oceans had horizons; skies were starred
With aspiration once. What accident
Has stilled the wind that should have tried their
wings?
By what caprice were their boats harbor-barred?
Have mercy, trees; judge action by intent!

CASTLES IN SPAIN

Oh, castles in Spain! Castles in Spain!
 Though one or all
 In time may fall
We build them, unheeding, again.
Those castles so rare—stately and fair
 Stand safe and strong
 The whole day long—
The loved of our hearts all dwell there.
Within those old walls, ivy-grown and tall
 Good Vesta's light
 Forever bright
Does watch and protect and bless all.
A wealth of sweet love, great wealth of gold
 There reign supreme
 Like a dear dream—
A story too sweet to be told.
No dread does remain; parting's sad pain,
 Nor vacant chair,
 To grieve us there
In castles that we build in Spain!
And ever the gentle breezes will blow—
 Tang of the sea
 And scent of lea—
Through wide open door and window.
There Youth and Beauty in jeweled train
 Pass to and fro—
 With eyes aglow—
Life they know and its glad refrain.
For them no pain and no wish is vain
 But that's in Spain—
 Far away Spain—
Where the loved of our hearts remain.

MY FRIEND

From out the stately lexicon of life,
I tear the page of sordid things and strife,
'Neath it I find the message that you sent,
Friendly and cheerful words, sincerely meant;
It's good indeed, to you this word to send:
I hope, life through, you'll ever be my friend.

THE SOIL

There's one sure thing that in us lies,
When we look out upon spring skies,
And see life, in its broil:
An envy of the man who works
The soil.

We would the furrow's pathway tread,
And help to win a war with bread;
Our fervor seems to boil,
When thoughts revert to how we love
The soil.

Reward for honest effort's found,
As nowhere in this world around,
'Mongst all who will to toil,
By him, who would himself devote,
To soil.

THE FEATHERED GLEANER

The bearded heads of golden grain mature,
And all the soft expectancy of June
Wafts sun-warm'd breezes; Bob-White's lyric song
Peals forth in carol low, but sweet in tune,
With Nature's task of feeding this world's throng.

Like a blown light, the season fades to fall;
Matures field crops and hastens leaves along,
They drift to earth, in colors bright and gay;
Gleaning the verdant fields, with beauteous song—
The Bob-White flits, with steadfast mate, away.

FUTILITY

My blood turns to water;
My knees are weak;
My heart thumps loudly;
I'm afraid and meek.
I bow to a force
That's stronger than I.
All this because I want you
And tears come but I can not cry.

SMOKE OUT OF A SILVER VASE

Smoke out of a silver vase—
Burnt out ashes—
The last flicker
Of a dying soul
Living on, but only
Smoke out of a silver vase.

A CHILD'S FANCY

The sky is naught but a bowl of soup
Grown cold and dark.
The moon is an oyster cracker
Swimming about in the soup
For a lark.

THE LONELY FOLK

The lonely are a folk apart
From ordinary men.
The locked up treasures in the heart
And dreams of Might Have Been,
And longings, cravings and desire
That only they surmise
Consume them like a mighty fire.
While they, with saddened eyes,
Can only watch the glad parade
Of laughing folk who pass
And conquer Fortune unafraid.

TOMB OF A SAGE

When stagnant light of sunset half aroused you from
death,
It must be that you slip through musty earth and, stand-
ing at the gateway of your tomb,
Bend slanted eyes along the gentle valley.

There gleaming slides the ribbon of bright river,
Folded sleep gay platters of brimmed field.
Across the wrinkled water of the flushing ponds, a
wind swings dancing feet of spidered gold,
And oblique tongues of sunlight roll their candled
blazes down the lilac boulders of the northern
hills.

Against the white horizon of an empty sky,
A bent man straining shoves reluctant plow.
Along a budded hedge a slim child homeward herds
His drowsy buffalo.
While following the slender curl of road that wraps
the hills,
Your eyes discern grass cutters, village bound,
Making mad jesting of the dull day's tasks.

The man who plows is shouting,
The slender little herder chanting shrill—
Yet only faintest echoes of their echoes spill your air.
The wind's bright voice, blue glit, withdraws their
gleaming freshness from your sleepy face.
Even the frogs, the birds, the shouting hosts of insects
flee your tomb—
Dull silence clings.

Forever sped from you beats gay earth's vibrant pulse.
Yet though you understand,
You feel no irony—no stabbing grief—no pain;
Bearing death's heavy fetters quietly,
Who walked mad life in calm.

REQUEST

Let there be stars and beauty manifest
To grace the earth where I shall lie, forever
Deep in its brooding vast; forgetting never
Of loveliness that feasts eternal rest
With rich remembrance. Though my body will
Dissolve among the rains and dews, above
Through cloud and wind and mist my pinioned love
Shall rise upon the singing heavens still.

And so, when with the circling time I've sought
A glimpse of secret splendor; if with most
Of joy I've fashioned mine a life intense;
The banquet done, the last sweet-bitter draught
Consumed; let me but thank my gracious host,
Then, with a high, serene release, go hence.

IMMATERIAL

I sing, but no sound
Is heard. Now I write verses,
But there are no words.
I paint a tall bamboo, but
There is no form or color.

RUNE

Three wandering clouds
Linger by a cliff surface
Pausing in design—
Misty signatures of gods
On the azure mountain-side.

PROJECTIONS

A row of candles
Casts infinite shadows on
The whitened, blank wall.
May infinite shadows be
Cast beyond my row of selves.

STERN CROWDS OF THE STREETS

I tramp the streets and face the throngs,
That flow, and flow, and flow!
In vain I look for one I know—
The friendly face for which one longs.

I hasten on, still all alone—
They grow, and grow, and grow.
I see them surging to and fro,
Their faces set, as cold as stone!

So thus the truth we all must find,
Though slow, so slow, so slow—
No stranger's face will light and glow,
Till cords of friendship kindly bind.

BEAUTIFUL IN DEATH

The king of cold hath blown his breath,
And left the leaves to fade in death;
To linger long in slow farewell,
While fading life doth stain each cell.

The charm of fall, this glint of gold,
From icy touch of winter's cold;
As if brave Nature, courage bent,
Hath war with evil forces sent.

All glory to persisting leaves!
Which die without display that grieves;
But clap their tinted hands in glee,
As if to say, "Weep not for me!"

MY LIFE

My life is a rippling water,
A streamlet on surface of earth;
A rivulet's whisper, a crater,
A nectar filled goblet of mirth.

My life is a shade of dawning,
A shadow in colorless tone;
A clarion's call at morning,
A sun-glaring ember at noon.

My life is a dying quiver,
An expression of soul at ease;
A gust of wind—but forever
A springblossom's hopeless demise.

AUTUMN

Fall thou leaves, but fall so gently,
On earth which soon shall call thee dust;
Take thine blending colors with thee,
To thine rest in snowy crust.

Autumn airs now shall replace thee,
Wail 'mong naked arms thou left;
Roaring storms which loudly praise thee,
They are also heaven blest.

Beauty's life is short, a while,
Becometh never monotone,
Carries with it happy smile,
Throws reflections when it's gone.

Too

"Solidity," he said, "is life's main buttress;
Keep mind at home—the earth's for feet to press . . ."
But the last person breathing to admit
His world a dream by giving form to it
From the chaotic impulse of the mind,
A poor reality to be thus confined
And segregated from a universe
No more in reason than in a poet's verse.

ADVANCE EROSION

When I have become past all becoming,
And cannot be seen amid a winter snow;
When Time has made me all but imperceptible —
Much like a three-year's nest hid in the vine,
I shall have a balcony built out
From my upper window, looking North,
And I shall have a chair wherein to sit
And watch the seasons trooping by each year;
Where I may watch the trees shake off their burden
In the truant wind, and become stone;
Where I may be so still the bird will tuck
A nest in the eave, thinking me harmless or friendly;
Where I may sit and see the cloud blown down,
And I am blown too, feather by feather.

ILLUSION

I stand in the late midnight
Looking, looking over the ever resigned trees
Into the huge shadow of night,
And see the full moon slip above the house tops
gliding;
And notice the roofs of homes white as fresh fell snow,
And remember not long before they were gray or red
or brown
And that soon they will be colorless in night,
When the moon has left the world
Darkly behind.

A DREAM

I had a dream last night, I dreamed I roamed
Among the clouds below God's mighty throne.
And, listening, heard steal on the midnight air
A whirl of wings, the oft ascending prayer
Of all mankind.

Like flocks of birds they came, some black as night,
And others dressed in plumage gay and bright,
And some with broken wings, who scarce could fly,
And some who, halting, with rebellious cry
Fell back to earth.

But one there was all glistening white who flew,
Unwavering, to Him he loved and knew.
And, soft, a voice came on the still night air,
"Because of thee, my one unselfish prayer,
All enter here."

THE FOURTH CROSS

I wonder when they looked upon
Those crosses on the hill
If they could see the fourth cross,
The one a mother filled

If they could know the sorrow
Of a heart so crucified,
Who watched her son's last agonies
Against the paling skies.

Though not in books, where one may read,
Or pictures, one may see,
There were four crosses on that hill,
That hill of Calvary.

BENEDICTION

My life is an altar, and my love
A candle burning there
While my heart is the offering I
Give in tender prayer.

My arms are where you come to
Rest from worldly pain,
And my lips are God's blessing
To soothe you again.

DISILLUSION

I placed you on a pedestal
High above the crowd,
I thought I'd found my ideal;
I was happy, I was proud—

I built a little altar
Out of stuff that dreams are made,
And thought myself infallible,
In my dreams that couldn't fade.

But you tumbled from your pedestal
To my feet one day,
I never dreamed my idol
Was made of common clay.

WIND

The wind whispers to the night
its song of love and despair
The rain beating the earth tells me
you are there.

Your love singing to me, a song
of hope and pain,
My love answering yours, through
the dripping rain.

SMOKE

An old woman
Curling
Her hair—
Reminds me . .
Of gray smoke
From a dying fire
Curling
Out a chimney.

SYMPATHY

In the forest—
Green,
Deep,
Silent
Two woodsmen
Chopped
A mighty oak.
Chewing,
Hewing,
Penetrating
The toad-like skin.
The oak
Quivering,
Shivering,
Fell.
A star in space—
Infinite,
Trembled—
Grieved
For
The
Tree.

SONNET NO. 22

"I sing the body electric"

What ancient malaise grips the human heart
Racking the spirit, withering the mind,
Dulling the reason and converting blind
The eyes of those who cannot see the part
That nature plays within the spiritual chart;
That part most martyred of all parts assigned—
To quicken life and then to be consigned
To scorn by mind's revigorated art.
Let man to his rich heritage aspire,
Boastful to all, ashamed before no man
To own the urge and ease of his desire,
To liberate the welling blood. To brand
No promptings of the flesh as sin, but fire
No puny inner voice can countermand.

SONNET NO. 34

To Claude Debussy

Before your songs I am stripped bare of art,
All words too futile, tears inadequate
To limn the melodies that tear my heart.
You sing of passion made dispassionate,
Of fragile beauty contemplating death,
Of holy famine and unholy drought,
Of loneliness sweet warmed by human breath—
You sing God mammon, pagan turned devout.
If to one strident melody should rise
A song of soul despair and soul desire,
Yours are the harmonies it would devise
To ask why dreams should die and love expire.
On steps of anguish to these heights ascend,
Yet poor the soul that cannot comprehend!

SAND DUNE CHORALE

Majestic sand dunes march in rhythmic cadence
across the far flung desert floor,
chanting to me;

“Oh futile man,
why are your eyes without clear vision,
your meager thought so cumbered
with the immaterial?
We seek always untrodden adventure,
glorying in the unbounded vista,
knowing deep, blue nights,
nearness of friendly stars,
the sunset afterglow on far horizon;
as changing winds list, we obey,
building again with stinging, infinitesimal
grains of sand,
massive, new-born mountains.
Come, seek with us the spaces of the Infinite,
Come—and be content.”

SUMMER'S DAUGHTER

Lightly, upborne upon an airy wing
Her rhythmic limbs absorb the sunlight's fire;
Too evanescent for a mortal thing
Seems this Euterpe with her fancied lyre.
She symbolizes youth's quick fantasies
Which flame white-heated in the dazzling air,
Embodiment of capricious wind, she is
A fleeting vision of keen beauty, where
Against the crested foam of ocean's blue
Her sun-browned form is one with sun-warmed sand.
She sings: her lilt interpreting anew
The joyousness of life in summer land.
Oh Child of tingling wind and salt flung spray
You are a breath from Grecian strand today!

CONTROL

May the council that sets for the nations
Place God in the chair of control,
And may they heed His rulings—
Obey the commands of the soul.

Let strife be barred from the council,
And selfishness die at the birth,
May patience and trust prevail in the hall,
And peace come again to the earth.

PASSING

I dreamed a dream of the long ago,
Of darkies singing soft and low
Down in the corn fields and the cane,
And the twilight fell
As they rang the bell,
The day was done, 'twas night again.
And what I dreamed you could never find,
Nor grasp the thought with your modern mind,
'Twas the sad sad tale of a people gone;
You may count your cost,
For their day is lost,
The wild sweet chant from the fields is gone.

No more may we sit in the evening calm
And hear the darkies chanting a hymn
In a sad or a mirthful, gleeful tune,
For never again
Will the lilting refrain
Be heard from the shadows, out under the moon.

TIME

"Let us forget," you wrote at last.
"That was so long ago.
Time's mantle throw
Over that sad and happy past."

I would I could have cast from me
Each moment bitter-sweet.
I did entreat
Time to efface each memory.

What futile words and idle thought!
You found in after years,
I learned with tears,
The past is in our being wrought.

THE CITY

The heat
Rises in waves
Up from the reeking streets,
Gasping, panting, drawing all life
With it.

The storm
Floods the gutters
Up from the steaming streets
Rises the odor of decay
And death.

Night comes—
Hear the children
Out in the reeking streets
Laughing, shouting, singing, dancing
Under stars.

TRANSCENDENTAL

When I would rise like a white cloud lightly lifting
Over the town,
When I would go, like still smoke upward drifting,
This flesh must weigh me down.

But when in spent surrender, I am turning
To earth's firm breast,
The winds of heaven set my spirit yearning. . . .
And will not let me rest.

WORKMEN WITH PICKS

Workmen with picks turn up the fossiled bones
Of perished dwellers in a bygone sea.
How long, dear heart, before the crumbling stones
Shall tell with mute gray tongues of you and me?

And what quaint limestone tracery shall hold
The passions that have fled,
When the last song is sung, the last kiss cold
And the last prayer said?

COOL DUST

It would be enough to die
And sleep into a far eternity
Indifferent to the noises of the sky:
The whirl of wings that one could never see.
I should not mind cool dust against my eyes.
Rain-washed dust as fine as white sea sand,
Unearthly roots close binding without ties,
Or longer tendrils tangling in my hands.
These things I should not mind at all
For earthly things can hurt me much, much more;
Dreams . . . tenacious leaves still clinging in the fall.
A shadow on your face, a look you wore.
More times than one forgetting would be bliss.
Soft rain, cool dust, exquisite nothingness.

SNOW

An avalanche of white stars
Fall about my feet
Stars that sting my face
With their hard cold brilliance.
I smile sardonically
For I have known another avalanche
Dreams as clear as brilliant stars
Fixed in their places,
White star dreams that left me gaping
When they fell.

And I was young enough
To have forgot
That every year it snows.

APRIL

The great god Angus followed, harp in hand,
Behind your footsteps, oh, Edain, the queen.
Your beauty was the mortal vision seen
That led from sea to sea, a bright command
For Angus, god of love. The whole wide land
Was echo of your face, Edain. You mean
As you did then, a sharpness silver keen
Of mortal beauty without mortal band.

It seems on sudden April days, when rain
Turns opal on the cool young grass, and spring
Stands lonely, splendid as you did, Edain,
That we can hear the harp of Angus sing.
And Angus hands immortal play—
Edain, your footsteps mark across today!

CHARLES SORLEY

"Such, such is Death: no triumph, no defeat."
No question offered you stamped down the seal
On life,—so much left for your hands to feel.
If you knew so early the gods would cheat,
What was there, then, that you went out to meet?
Did life itself drop down on your head and congeal
On your schoolboy mouth to stop and heal
The wound your old-man's knowledge made and beat?
You were so young to know so very much,
And younger still to stop and speak with death.
I wonder, did you pause and catch your breath
As life slid by that you had yet to touch.

Your song stays. But what were the words you said,
The thoughts you had, you poet who are dead?

TUNE FOR TEA

Why do I keep waiting,
Knowing I must lose
All that I hold dearest,
All the goals I choose.

Why do I keep praying
With this hopeless smile,
Watching my castles fall
Into the rubbish pile.

"GOD, IS IT WRONG?"

God, is it wrong for me to feel
Just once in all the years—
A rushing breath of ecstasy
That enters through the tears.

Oh, is it wrong for me to think
Only of love today,
In glorious expectancy
As one who kneels to pray?

"THE REST IS SILENCE . . ."

Someday I am going to see all the things I have wanted
to see,
And when I have them all stored up in my heart,
I am going to sleep.

STOIC

Ancient little scarab,
Set into a ring,
Guarding well your secret,
Telling not a thing,

Hard and wise they call you,
Prying at the lid
That clasps you in your silver set
And keeps your secret hid.

But I have seen the scratches
Cut into your shell:
Poor little scarab,
Much too sad to tell.

BACCHANTE

I saw a winter statuette,
Naked in the park,
A marble ghost Bacchante boy,
White against the dark;

Dreaming of Greece and olive groves,
White hills and a purple vine,
Where through the blue, Aegean nights
He sipped the sweet, weak wine.

Fall softly, snow, on his naked youth,
Wrap him in crystal white;
There is no Greece, nor song, nor wine
For a statue in the night.

And though he is beautiful, he must be cold
With ice upon his heart:
A naked boy and a Bacchanal
Two thousand years apart.

DAY'S END

Gray shade and shallow moon
Low in the west,
And dark against the sky, slow-winged, a loon
Seeks its nest.
The marsh below, a shattered mirror, holds
Day's paling light
On sedge-slit pools that gleam till dusk embolds
Inevitable night.

AUGUST IN VIRGINIA

While Summer dreams
The myrtles hold high carnival, their flowers
Like crapy lanterns, bursting into showers
Of gay confetti, lilac, white and red.
The somber ivy, stooping from its height,
Opens pale, pointed buds, and soft-aired night
Brings perfume pilfered from the alder's bed.

Deep in the woods
Cool-fingered Autumn creeps all stealthily
To spy on Summer, never dreaming, she,
The tell-tale leaves would flame the news ahead.

FRUSTRATION

You never come when the young moon dips,
Spilling out love, to lay your lips
On my waiting lips. And, when the old
Moon spreads a pall so white, so cold,
Lonely I shiver in its light
And count the hours of a wasted night.

THE MIDDLE-AGED VIRGIN

Through black, bitter nights,
She hears the soundless clamour
Of orange moonlight
Whispering to naked boughs,
About life's futility.

PUPPY LOVE

Our love was like the sudden swish
Of a rocket in the deep-blue night;
When it burst, I know not, but I wish
I still was standing in the light
And glory of those falling stars,—
Instead of washing pots and jars!

THE CANDLE OF EXPERIENCE

Have you forgotten nights beside the sea,
With passion thundering against your ears?
The world was sinless then; life held no fears
For two young captives love would never free;
To-night, the brittle moon-light seems to be
A lacquered rainbow, made of hidden tears;
As I go vagabonding down the years,
I wave this sonnet to your memory.

We carved exquisite love to beauty's dream,
And nailed it on the cross of our desires,
To wear the crown of honor's recompense;
While once, our love's perfection seemed supreme,
Against the majesty of stars, expires
Our little candle of experience.

AWAY DOWN SOUTH

Black is my body;
Black my soul
But blacker than
The darkest night
Are the souls of the men
Who strung me up.

Grey-green,
Touched with black,
The Spanish moss
Hangs about my dangling body
As if to hide
My shame.

What will hide
The black souls of the hangmen
When Charon waits
At the crossing
For them?

COMPARISON

Her eyes are brown:
 So liquid are they,
 So flecked with gold,
That Chinese amber in the sun
Comes nearest to comparison.

THE ENCHANTED GARDEN

Hidden, high upon a hill,
At night, when all is still,
The lovely garden lifts its face,
Veiled in exquisite moon-made lace,
Patterned from a tall larch tree. . . .
'Tis there my love makes love to me.

WINTER TREES

Devoid of bud and bloom,
The beauty of their crooked straightness
Is strong and true.
Bent and twisted limbs,
Nature's work—repentance money
For her sins.

Risen from the sod,
They stand, these living dead,
In prayer to God.

A GOSSAMER

Misty, silver-spun,
Webbed like old lace,
Lightly from the bough it hung
A fairy's song of grace.

Meshed, gauze-spun,
Woven into space,
Softly in the breeze it swung
A fairy's song of grace.

Fragile, film-spun,
Worked by the spider race,
Lasting only till the song is sung,
A fairy's song of grace.

SEA WINDS

I'm pining today for the scream of the gull,
As over the sea his white wings race,
And to hear the roar of the tide roll in
And the sting of the salt sea wind on my face.

The mountain peaks may well be proud
Of their towering heads that pierce the sky,
But the soul of me longs for the tang of the sea,
For the wind in my face, and the sea-bird's cry.

AN INARTICULATE SOUL

An inarticulate soul am I,
Without the healing benefit of tears,
Caught in the vortex of a mad desire,
That madder grows, as grow the years.

Alone, with joyous life on every side,
I sit, trying to bind my ravelled seam,
Fearing to pause lest from my hand the fabric fall,
A tattered dream.

NOVEMBER

A waning moon with weary, tawny hand
Flinging faint streams of light across the land,
A vagrant wind, a scudding cloud of grey,
And flocks of wild geese honking up the bay.

A poor, belated robin in a tree,
The crisp and frozen grasses on the lea,
A single russet apple on its bough,
The frozen furrows and the frosted plough.

The ingle-nook, the candles' flickering ray,
An old familiar tale, a roundelay,
A bed of down, a prayer—too quickly said,
A mother's kiss, and "good night, sleepy head."

GOLDEN FEET

Morning walks
On golden feet
Across the meadows,
Chasing shadows
From their hiding places.

AS A BELL

As a deep-resounding bell in yonder tower,
When hammer blows fall fast upon the rim,
Sends o'er the fields and forests round
Its sweet reverberating swell;
So may I, when blows of envy, hatred, malice,
Beat hard and cruel upon my naked soul,
Send forth songs of joy and hope, exultingly,
To tell the listening world that all is well.

STONE THROWERS

In the feet-stirred dust of the highway,
The sharp accusing stone,
Beneath the tread of retreating heels,
Lay unthrown.

MORNING

I see dawn with crimson wings
Come with new-fledged day;
As night gathers in her arms
The moon, and the clustered stars,
And takes them all away.

REQUIEM

Against the tower of my sad solitary heart
There blew a wind tonight, while it grew cold
Thus close beneath the snow-grey breath of stars, apart
From flames and coals of warmth your fingers hold,
And eyes that smolder fantasies untold.

The day had sunk its unimportant hours at last
Into the scarlet sacrificial rite
Of sunset. Nothing had remained but a pale blast
Oblivion re-echoed through the night
Of shadows bending back in chilled delight.

No more the singing of your heart against my own,
Nor beauteous moments of high thoughts and rest,
For you were lost, as though the frosted wind had
blown
You, like the hours of day, into the west.
No more your peace that silenced me and blessed.

ACQUIESCENCE

Tonight, I think, I'd like to watch you, there,
Across the room from me, like steel engraved
In simple beauty, free from the despair
Of words and the charred meanings thus enslaved;
And listen to the wind outside all night
Unwind its heart among the shadow-shaped
Oak trees and hills, and hear its shrill delight,
Intangible yet sure, like hearts escaped;
While by your side would fade red coals of fire
That all the evening had burned out a flame,
In scarlet carnival of their desire
To leap beyond the confines of their claim;
To watch you gradually elude my view,
And in the wind and coals discover you.

UNION SQUARE

What is this ceaseless, muffled sound,
That knocks at heart,
And stirs the pulse with hint of fear,
As though, from under sod, drew near
The restless, unknown dead,
The long-forgotten, unnamed dead,
In unremembered Potter's Field,
Deep under Union Square?

Here, just beyond the town, young Washington
First stirred his handful few of men
To war:
Here Patti sang, one old-time day:
And, now, the tall, gray buildings lay
A shadow on a speed-mad street.
Yet tulips grow,
In Union Square,
Tall tulips gay,
In candled rows;
And grass glints green,
In all its spring-bright emerald sheen,
Quite unaware.

What is this ceaseless, muffled sound,
That knocks at heart?
The shuffle of a million feet,
The muttered threats, like fists that beat
At prison doors,
Or voice the age-old cry for bread.
Trampled the shining tulips, where
Revolt lifts hydra head.

What have the old, neglected dead
To do with banners flaming red,
Held high, in Union Square?

ULTIMATE MATING

I am not a mystic.
I can not go,
With the cool of face,
Where the high winds blow.
For once on a hill
Front-chilled, frost-white,
My lips pressed hard
On the earth one night.
The cold snow melted
Beneath my kiss,
And lips to lips,
The earth told me this:
"You are part of me—
And follow you must
Your face to the sun,
Your feet in the dust!
Until I shall call you
When winds grow shrill,
When songs are hushed
And hearts are still!"

AT SUNRISE

They pushed him straight against the wall;
The firing squad dropped in a row,
And why he rose upon his toes,
Those men shall never know.

He wore a smile across his face
As he stood primly there,
The guns all aiming at his heart,
The sun upon his hair.

For he remembered in a flash
Those days now past recall
When his proud mother took his height
Against the bedroom wall.

IN THE WEE SMA' HOURS

I'm spent, Lord,
I feel like quitting;
But they need me here.
Stay with me, I beg,
Till morning,

I'm worn, Lord,
My heart is heavy,
My body's weary, too.
Even though
They think me strong,
Let me lean on You.

CALVARY TO DATE

I heard her beg for breathing spell, for air,
And heard the foreman caustically reply
That resting hours were not in keeping there,
That he could fill her place from fresh supply.
I heard her plead for mercy, then I looked
And saw her eyes on me in quick despair;
She knew that I was seeking to be booked,
And bent to labor with a jealous care.

Oh, circumstance that makes us idle, cringe,
Can hunger's state be but the outer fringe?

WITHOUT RHYME OR REASON

My daughter lays her clothes away
With an exquisite touch;
Her room resembles a bouquet . . .
Oh, I love her very much.

Her brother flings his clothes about
With gestures used to swim;
I slyly clean the wreckage out . . .
God! how I worship him.

AFTER THE STORM

Intricate tree-tops blackly etched
 Upon the sunset gilt;
The kind old earth in comfort stretched
 Beneath her snowy quilt.

TRIOLET

If a valentine came
Would you guess who had sent it?
Would you search for the name?
When that valentine came,
With my love all aflame,
Would you know that I meant it?
If a valentine came
Would you guess who had sent it?

MAY

Before shy April left the budding hills,
She made a lovely gown of celadon
For May; awoke her with the lutey trills
Of orioles—then in a mist was gone.
Aurora's pink-tipped fingers dropped rare pearls,
Which mortals know as sparkling morning dew
But festive May, entwines them in her curls,
And binds her lissome beauty with a few.
She dances down each blossom-shaded way
She scatters perfume through the silken air;
Awakes the fields, unseals the buds that sway,
Still lost in dreams; until with gentle care
And soft caress, the whole world sings and laughs;
And in content, its cup of splendor quaffs.

INFINITY

Whose the hand, that loosed those giant constellations
That set them whirling out in empty space?

Whose the hand that brought ruled order from the
chaos

That gave each star and sphere its proper place?

Did not the same hand, trembling, form the mountains
And add an unknown depth to every sea?

Did not a giant finger trace the rivers,
And in the self same gesture, set them free?

Why must we worry then and fret at little things
When over all there dwells that brooding hand?

Cannot a human soul attain that higher plane—
Were not all moulded from the Maker's sand?

INHERITANCE

I think I must have loved the trees
In long past dim eternities.

I think they sheltered me and mine
And tempered the sun's unceasing shine.

And in dark centuries long ago
The trees were shield against the snow.

I think the ages cannot kill
The memory of trees upon a hill.

And I must always restless be
Unless my eyes can see a tree.

MY PRAYER

Release my soul, Oh gentle Saviour
From this worn tenement racked with pain,
Release my soul, Oh hear my pleadings
That I may go where God's children reign.

I may have faltered by the wayside
I did the best that I knew how,
So release my soul, Oh hear my pleadings,
Do not forsake me now.

I've borne my cross with courage
On my face I want a smile to remain
That smile to tell a message
That my prayers were not in vain.

PUEBLO FLOOD

'Mid the rushing swirling waters
Stood a train like a stag at bay
Helpless with no earthly power to save it
Forlorn it looked and swayed.

While the waters higher grew,
You could hear the cries and prayers
Of those fighting for their lives
On this earth to be spared.

But in that awful moment
Sat one woman sweetly smiling,
On her withered lips was this prayer:
"I am ready; I've lived my life of joys and care."

Gently o'er the waters she was wafted
To the land she knew not where,
But she heard her Saviour calling
And to Him she went prepared.

O THOU UNADORNABLE

O thou unadornable!
Though I drape thy form with vernal velvet,
Though I weight thy limbs with gleaming gold
And make thy throat to glow with peerless pearls,
Thine hair to emulate the stellar heavens
With dazzling diamonds—they all are dull nothingness
In the ashless fire of thine empyreal soul,
Aflame in thine eyes!

SOUL-DISCOVERY

While men beneath a sombre sky
Go huddling through the rain,
This selfsame day up-borne am I
On crest of a crystal main.

It seems not right that they should miss
The heart-throb of the tide,
While I alone receive the kiss
Of joy, as from my bride;

But could I share with them one hour
My new friend shares with me,
They, too, would know the surging power
Of soul-discovery.

PRAYER

Out of the dewy dell of Heart,
Into the ocean surge of Soul:

A rising and a setting
Of diurnal desire—
A suppliant begetting
Of the hopes that aspire

To draw from the mystery of Whole
A strength for the weaknesses of Part.

I WATCHED FOR THE DAWN

I watched for the dawn in my garden.
The light subtly peeped past a hill,
And kissed a pale rose till her petals
Blushed red; then a bird's soft low trill,
Aroused from their sleep its fond nestlings,
All cuddled in rose-covered tree.
The dew on the grass turned to crystals.
I heard then the hum of a bee.
I turned to behold in a lily,
A beautiful halo of white;
And thrilled, at the thought and the wonder
Of God, and the power of light.

LIFE'S TAPESTRY

Both sunlight and shadows,
On life's path we find;
And intricate patterns
Are ours to unwind.
We trace, and we retrace,
Till steps that are clear
Reflect understanding
On problems most near.
Thus, onward we travel;
Sufficient each day
The light that is given,
To guide on our way.

LEPERS

I paced the deck and watched a red, gold sunset
Filling the western sky with a lovely glow.
I knew that a God who painted with such colors
Could naught but a tender love and mercy show.

When an eerie black island blotted out the radiance
A chill wind, passing, swept the darkening sky
I remembered then that He who painted sunsets
Had also painted the Isle of Molakai.

THE PRIESTESS

At the foot of steps two hundred and seven
'Neath the tomb of a Sho Gun ages dead
In this garden old stands a carven shrine
With dim gilded walls and its roof of red.

Now tarnished the gilt and dim is the painting
Which tells of the deeds of this ruler great
But few in Japan have forgotten the tale
Of a life which these things shall perpetuate.

From inside the shrine in this garden of memory
Comes a drone from the lips of a toothless hag,
She unfurls her fan with its background of gold
She postures and smiles, but her sunken cheeks sag.

Long years have passed since she was a Geisha
Lauded for beauty and grace in the dance,
Waving bright fan in the No of the ancients
Swirling kimono—eyes arch with each glance.

“Just a few sen for the dance that is sacred,
Just a few sen to honor the dead!”
Gnarled hand outstretched as alms she solicits
Swaying and chanting beneath roof of red.

Dead is the Sho Gun and dimmed is the fairness
Of the old temple priestess muttering low
Time has its way with power and beauty
Shuddering, from the old garden I go.

MIDNIGHT SYMPHONY
In New England

A flash of lightning out of the dark,
The whip-poor-will's plaintive cry,
The roll of far distant thunder,
The barking of a dog near by.

The deep bass of a frog in a pond,
The cat purring on the hearth,
The katydid in the quiet lane,
The young lovers joyous laugh.

The patter of rain upon the roof,
The tall pines' gentle sigh,
The weird call of a loon on the lake,
The hoot of an owl from on high.

The scent of the Balm of Gilead,
The path of gold on the sea,
The myriad stars in the heavens,
Compose my Midnight Symphony.

GONE

There is something, oh God,
That is deader far
Than a burned out match
Or a vanished star!
It is the cold grey ash
On the unbrushed hearth
When the mother's hand no longer sweeps
Or tends the home she loves and keeps.

How black the sooty chimney is,
How cold the room, how desolate!
How lonely sounds the falling rain,
How dim and blurred the window pane!
How soulless is the old low chair
When the mother is not there!

MARCH IN ESCAMBIA'S WOODS

Looping from twig to twig in wild abandon,
Yellow jessamine sway like
Golden butterflies upon a stem,
While the flowered plum
Waiting for the honey bee,
Wonders why he does not come.
Through her wedding veil of fairy lace,
One sees the joy of living in her face.
The bee will come and claim his own
Sure as the incense of the forest thrown
To where the distant hive is born.

The big bud hickory bravely has thrown back
His warm red cap,
And nears; upon his brow
The new green leaves of victory.
In Escambia's woods the earth is now awake
And spring is here,
And I am yours and you are mine
And this is Nature's lovetime of the year!

NOCTURNE

The moon, a silver sloop asail
Upon a sea of blue,
The stormy petrel's screaming wail,
Over the lapping waves,
And thoughts of you.

The stars, the twinkling eyes of night,
Shine in the sky above,
The evening breeze, caressing, light,
Stirring the sleeping leaves,
And sighs of love.

RUIN

A shell-shocked hillside, wraith of other days
When happy children waged their mimic frays,
An ancient plowshare turned upon its side,
A battered garden gate left gaping wide,
On guard a hollyhock abloom once more,
Alone of all that blossomed there before;
And just beyond, oh shade of glories past,
A shattered fountain by the wayside cast!

WHEN MARCH WINDS BLOW

When March winds leap from beds of snow
They wield their swift brooms to and fro;
And with a roaring gale of mirth,
They sweep the cobwebs from the earth.

The plowman bends him to the blast
And whips his team to furrow fast;
The trees shake bud crowned heads on high
And toss wild branches to the sky.

The stream which trickles down the hills
Is lashed to speed, with promise thrills.
When March winds shuttle to and fro
The threads of spring; soon green things grow.

TRINITY CHURCH YARD—NEW YORK

Know, O ye dead, that your mark is not etched in stone,
Only in the memories of those who need no reminder.

Who visits a strange grave in an unknown city,
Who worships at the altar of another god
Placed twenty paces from his own?
Who but devils who perch on the stones and laugh
Until dawn,
Or office-workers, eating from papers at noon?

HARMONY

(I am passing by you . . .)
You motionless trees of filagree green,
Mounting the blunt staff of the hill
Like the thoughtful notes of a Largo . . .
(I stop to look at you.)
Now you seem to me
The chord of loveliness that is Italy,
Dotted by the staccato red
Of a peasant-woman, who
Rests in your shade, unhearing.

SAINT PETER'S—ROME

There might have been incense in the air . . .
But air is alive, and dies
Never to move again,
When it enters this place . . .
No, it must have been the pollen-dust
Of flowers once swept by the wind
That we smelled . . .
Nothing lived in that huge place,
And even sounds of actions watched
Died before they reached our ears . . .
Light waited outside the door,
Would even have ventured in,
But a man waited there to bar the way
Of a woman without sleeves in her dress,
And cast his shadow in the sun . . .

THE TREES' VAIN CALL

Sadly sigh, thou lonely maples;
Vainly, fir trees, stretch thine arms.
Never more shalt thou shelter
Those who answered the call: "To Arms"!

For they sleep within the shadows
And the dim of smoke and shell.
Vainly stretch thine arms, O maple.
Know ye not those laddies fell?

Still, beneath their waving banner
Live those boys again, today.
Though "Advance" their master ordered.
They in memory live for aye.

THEIR COLONEL

The drums had ceased to echo,
The bugles had ceased to play,
The cannons fired a salute
As they heaped the moist, cold clay.

Deep in the earth they laid him
And every eye was wet.
He had been their Colonel
The best man ever yet.

He had been a friend and comrade,
Led them safely through the fray.
But a greater master called out "Advance!"
Ere was ended that winter's day.

WILD BEAUTY

On the wings of the wind comes the grayness of high-singing rain,
Running down past the stones in the channels of clay
on the hill
With a wildness of song to the valleys below; and
again
From the depths of the earth comes the sound where
the storm freshets spill
In the lake with a voice like the deep-rolling thunders
of night.
And the dripping and lead-colored clouds stream the
length of the sky
From the northernmost reaches of vastness and half-lucid light
Down the lanes of strong wind to the south where
the brightnesses die.
And the teal rises swift from the river with beat of
great wings
Through a flight of dark rain to the regions where
solitude breeds
In a tumult of clouds; where the wind of the north
wildly sings
With the sound of a wilderness trembling like stems
of lithe reeds.
And the gull leaves the white-flowing crest of the wave
with a scream
Of defiance and triumph, to blend like a wraith with
the cloud;
For the spirit of storm rushes down as the far mountains stream
Past the pine forest onto the plain with a watery
shroud.

POEMS

A poem is a lovely thing;
It flies upon the swallow's wing,

And slumbers on the clouds afar,
And wakes at dawn upon a star;

It sings along the Milky Way,
And warms the gentle winds of May;

In heavens it may like to roam,
But here on Earth it makes a home,

And dances on a foaming brook,
And often hides within a book.

But lyric love I sought apart,
And found my poem in your heart.

MORNING

We watched the sunrise, you and I,
While standing on a hill,
And hand in hand beneath the sky,
We dreamed, as lovers will.

I felt the wind upon my face,
And saw it in your hair;
A thistle in a dewy place
Was nodding sweetly there.

The morning's done—a memory,
But silently they stand
(My love for you, your love for me)
Forever hand in hand.

LILACS

Oh, lilacs, how can you be so beautiful
And spill your fragrance into the night,
When the pearl winged dawn may bring but shadows
And all of living seem ended quite.

Perhaps your bars of silver, orchid,
Are an exquisite rainbow end of tears,
That joy again may find fulfillment,
Through the widening vista of triumphant years.

APRIL SHOWERS

I walk through the crystal April showers,
With the hyacinths opening as I pass
And the dainty amber heads of dandelions,
Blooming against the fragrant new made grass.

The leaves in their scented delicate patterns,
Uplift their slender greenness to the spring,
While love and all my exquisite dreaming,
Are interwoven through everything.

MYSTERY

A lounging chair and roseate lights,
Beloved books that are always near,
Have been so long such familiar sights,
With their spirit of home appealingly dear.

But now those precious things are strange,
With a glamor I never knew before,
Since love has come with its mystical change
And placed a seal upon my door.

ANOTHER SONG

Another song? I like to sing to you,
Unchained to let my wayward fancy rove,
The conscious present gently to remove,
To peer behind the veil that hides from view
The mystic future, to recall the past,
To build me airy temples, wond'rous, vast.

But mostly do I love to steal away
And silently unlock the pond'rous door
That opens into childhood's realm; once more
Behold, far off, the merry group at play.
Across the lapse of years they call to me,
Dear ghosts of happy days that used to be.

I sometimes think they are not mine at all—
Those songs I sing. So long, it seems to me,
I've known them—longer even than Memory
Retracing through her pages can recall.
Of joy, of love, of youth, of home—thus sings
My muse should restive Fancy touch the strings.

Not mine the power to quell the songs within!
Can clouds obscure for aye the twinkling stars?
The linnet's song comes through the prison bars
In sweetest cadences. A violin,
Awakening to the touch of master hand,
Pours forth its very soul at his command!

So sing I on, though few may hear my song,
And fewer still the hearts that might be found
In which an answering echo will respond
Of those who hear amid the busy throng.
Like feathered songster hidden by the way,
The impulse stirs me and I tune my lay.

AT MY WINDOW

From my sixth floor window
I gaze o'er the city
And count every one of
Its sky scraping towers;
I hear the deep tones
From the City Hall belfry
Solemnly peal forth
The fast fleeting hours.

The noise and the bustle
Hum lazily upward,
The lights on the buildings
Outsparkle the stars
As back to my sixth floor
My thoughts return slowly
From a dreamy sojourn
In Venus and Mars.

ALONG THE SHORE

Upon the beach the soft waves rolled
And to the sands their story told,
Each wavelet whispered to the shore
How its love for her grew more and more.

The gulls in slow majestic swing
Took to the air with lazy wing,
As fleecy clouds with tinge of red
Stood for a time just overhead.

Across the straits the smiling sun
Slowly sank, then day was done;
And Luna on her starry way
Stole through the night to find the day.

WINTER IN THE SUBURBS

Sharp shadows slant through crisp air
On to a dead sheet of silver snow.
Cold moon, stars, and the grey heaven
Shiver down on a still flat world
Dead for ten thousand sightless years.
Silently the calm beauty of death creeps on
Invisibly moving; hissing without sound
Entering like a blue steel dust
Even the deepest shadow.
Suddenly a pale sharp glow
Leaps from a quick-lighted window
Turning to living fire a hot
Wet patch of snow.

FALL IN THE COUNTRY

A lonely night-bird hushes cautiously.
Through weaving trees the lawn is interlaced
With veils of black and purple by the moon.
A nervous rabbit slips out from a shadow
And stands erect; his belly mirrored to the moon.

BAY IN CANADA

The polished steel of water blurs into the fog.
With hush staccato a motor boat plods on invisible.
Soundless a guillemot slices across our bow
With shuttled flashing wings of silvered black
And crimson lacquered feet.

NIGHT CLUB

A hundred undulating couples sway
To music under a roof of white and black.
A mirrored crystal ball swirls flakes
Of blue and red through noisy darkness.
The music stops expectantly. . . . A rhythmic
Girl slides into the shadow. With two
Sparkling hands she clutches her partner's head
And kisses him on the mouth.

CLEMATIS

In the deep purple velvet of your bloom
Clinging with regal contour to your vine,
Wound on the trellis down below my room
I found a love perennially mine.

Then in the matted grasses' tall striped blades
Or ivory petaled lilies in my pool
And in the zinnias' Indian blended shades
I took my refuge from a preying ghoul,

Whose morbid, shivering delight in grief
Reached out with clutching fingers to devour
The very living greenness of your leaf
And crush the softness of your purple flower.

The lonely captive of this evil ghoul,
Again I am love's maudlin, helpless fool.

TRIAD

When I am freed from pain,
Down in the powdered dust
I shall lie beneath the rain.

And I shall have relief
From the anguish of my virgil
There in my white shroud's sheaf.

Have you ever thought or known
How in a cocoon of hopes
I waited for you alone?

OLD SAILOR'S REVERIE

The solid deck, the heaving swell,
The deep toned mighty throated bell,
The solemn roar on distant shore,
The ships that sail, alas, no more
Are chords that bind my thoughtful mind
To sea, with loud tempestuous wind.
These notes are staves of memory,
The singing saga, the surging sea
*With solid deck, with heaving swell,
With deep toned mighty throated bell.*

ROCKED IN THE CRADLE

Beat, beat, beat, through all my dreams
You swaying deep blue sea;
Splash, splash, splash, on port hole glass
Which lies just aft of me.

Thump, thump, thump, by gentle waves
That carry me to sleep;
Rock, rock, rock, in Neptune's bed
Which rests me on the deep.

Lap, lap, lap, from distant lands,
You ageless lover grand;
Soothe, soothe, soothe, my tired eyes,
My lovely sweetheart's hand.

Dream, dream, dream; I'm dreaming now
Of you in gentle guise;
Sail, sail, sail, my dream ship sail
Beneath the southern skies.

SUNSET

God has painted me a perfect day
And wiped his brushes
On the sky at evening.

SONG OF THE SIRENS

Come all ye farers of the sea,
Come as we croon our songs to thee.
Come strangers at our soft entreat,
Come all, and worship at our feet.
For who is there that can withstand
The swelling of our music grand?
More beauteous than the sea's wild ring
Are songs the lovely sirens sing.
Hum and chant, hum and chant—
The sirens bid you hear.

Come crafty sailors, far and wide;
O'er wave swept sea the dolphins ride
So join the cormorant and gull
Come where the sirens softly lull
Their ditties on a dune of waves—
Come all ye daring handsome braves!
The water calls you, so do we,
So come while songs we sing to thee.
Hum and chant, hum and chant—
The sirens bid you hear.

Sing songs of freedom in the blast,
Set your sails and travel fast.
Hurry! While you still have time
Tell your stories make your rhyme.
Do all this, but be aware
You near the siren's white capped lair;
And here we wait to sing to thee
To end your life among the free—
Hum and chant, hum and chant—
The sirens bid you hear.

THE FIRST AVIATOR

Swift seeker of the splendor of the sun—
Invader of the shining realms of light—
You rolled your days of life up into one
And spent that day with glory. So you died.
But we less daring men of little worth
Would wish to soar, yet keep our feet on earth.

TO ONE WHO CHANGED

Life sang itself into a splendid song
When once we loved (long lives ago that seems),
For then your parting lips and opening arms
Swung wide the doors of rapture.

All dank and shuddery now is that warm bed.
The touch of your once loved locks upon my flesh
Stings me like adders. Through the ghastly dark
Your green eyes glow with cold malicious fire.

And those warm soft sweet milky breasts I kissed,
So tender and fragrant, are changed to alabaster,
Cold, white, and hard and tipped with ruddy prongs:
Even while I clasp you fiercely, tense with pain,
They press into me, crush me, pierce my heart.

O thing of satiny skin and flint and steel!
When your hands clasp my flanks your claws sink deep;
And when you kiss with loose and luscious lips
Your teeth strike fang-wise. Your encircling arms
Cling to me like twin coils of slippery snakes
That slither along my skin and seize my form,
Crushing my soul out.

LINES FOR ANOTHER DARK AGE

Darkly rises Golgotha
Against the setting moon.
And through the stranger gleaming
A star-pierced sullen noon
Deepens the broken shadows
Walking the earth too soon.

The faceless ancient singers
Stand silent in the night,
Waiting anew the firstling:
The miracle of light,
In the bitter midnight standing
Forgetting the pain of sight.

LAZARUS CANNOT SLEEP

The delicate assurance
Of the last disintegration
Imparts a strange allure
Through a grave's dishabitation.

Your eyes are whitely muted
At the violated,—never
Can horror be refuted
When the soul lost all endeavor.

You rose at His behesting
To a sorrow's perfect keeping.
You lost your place of resting
Yet there is no end of sleeping.

RETRIBUTION

You walk across my smooth expanse of life
With steps that echo as upon a floor.
You wear the surface in your constant strife
And care not how your hobnails cruelly bore.
But after you have passed you must complain
How very rough then has become the grain.

RAIN

Rain—soft, drowsy rain
That is too sleepy to fall fast,
And I—too tired to close the door.
So the rain, with clinging fingers
Caresses me, and we are drowsy together.

THE WEAVER OF DREAMS

The mighty Weaver wove you in man's soul,
Oh dreams, you foolish dreams;
You are the froth that bubbles from the bowl—
You are the pennant on the distant goal—
You are the harbor where no breakers roll;
You are the splendid vision of the whole.
Oh dreams, you foolish dreams.

The mighty Weaver patterned you with gold—
Oh dreams, you foolish dreams,
With rainbow silks he wove you in the fold
Of grief, and where life's dusky pattern told
Of bright hopes bartered, and of visions sold;
He spun you vivid threads of living gold—
Oh dreams, you foolish dreams.

The mighty Weaver spun you on the loom,
Oh dreams, you foolish dreams,
That stands for sorrow and predicted doom,
And shaped your pattern in the sullen gloom
Of strife and war, and failure that must loom
Beside you in the space of one small room,
Oh dreams, you foolish dreams.

The mighty Weaver fashioned you, and said;
"Oh dreams, you foolish dreams,
A thousand kings have followed where you led—
A thousand fields have for your light run red.
You have laid low a thousand dreamers dead—
But what if you had never been!" he said—
Oh dreams, you foolish dreams.

LILLIES

Lillies call to the Faith outworn.
Lillies gladden the Hearts forlorn.
Lillies plead for the Virtue torn.
Lillies say to your Soul: Adorn!

Lillies tell fear of Death is shorn.
Lillies herald a new Hope born.
Lillies breathe Resurrection Morn.
Lillies from God—though man may scorn.

VICTORY'S TOLL

There is a toll gate charge
To enter Victory's domain
Wherein dwells Love and Peace
And everything there is to gain.

To the Victor belongs the spoils
But "What Price Victory" we say!
When the Collector opens the gate
Travail of Soul is the only pay!

The wine press of sorrow
Drips out its tears today.
Temptations scorned tomorrow
Give you the right of way.

Victory does claim a toll
Though conquest is yours by might.
Now, denizen of earth, you shall be
A citizen of that state by right.

SEARING WINDS

They call in vain, your roses left in bloom,
Their perfume scattered now on winds afar;
The little home you loved—each darkened room—
Is strangely still, and not a door ajar.

The singing brook that pierced your sleep at dawn,
Is silent now beneath the leafless trees;
The happy birds you heard upon the lawn,
Have vanished southward with the summer breeze.

And I, who brought you here when skies were fair,
Sharing your thoughts of glad, eternal May,
Sensed not the blast that left your garden bare,
That hushed the brook and sent the birds away.

And you, who held the fragile thread of dreams,
Bound in the joy of weaving, could not see
How soon the leaves would lie on silent streams
And loneliness would rend the heart of me.

Now must I go—to move your empty chair,
To smooth the pillows where your head has lain
And clasp the tiny garments folded there—
God, speed the night—let dawn break fair again!

TO THE NIGHT SKY

Trans-mundane rose of star-lit petals wrought,
Set deep with all thy breath hath offered sight
And all which finite imagery has thought . . .
Each phase of beauty giving mental light
On thy unfading bloom and heart of gold!
Oh dusky rose! 'Tis Life's intrinsic force
That makes thine endless field a vital mold
In which persistent buds may learn their source
And realize life's fair autumnal day
When mists of Earth's evolving clear away,
And wonders of each scintillating leaf
Shall, like the smile of Joy caressing Grief,
Imprint our vision with the life-to-be,
As thy last kiss gives immortality.

TO MORNING LIGHT

As from the casement of Life's mental door
Earth sweeps aside the drapes that bar thy breath,
All hearts leap forth to welcome and implore
Thy fervent kiss, Oh most alluring Morn!
As o'er each brow thy finger-tips now play
And arms of love embrace thy wondrous charm,
Harmonic-life, as one sweet song of joy,
Entwines the soul with Beauty's smile divine.
Thou art the all—the all of Earth and sky—
The breath of babe, of rose, or ocean's foam,
For all that's vast and great or most minute,
Is choraed from thy breast—as of thine own.
And thus in arms of thine, oh, morning-light,
We find the key to Life's efficient might.

THE JESTER

Life
Can be a jest.
Fate
The jester
Is a fool.
See him dance—
Ugly, deformed, knave.
And his grin
Fills one
With disgust.
We, poor humans,
What are we
To do?
Naught but look
At life and fate
And
Dance and grin.

LOVE

Love
Is the intermingling
Of two souls.
Its attainment
Is like
The harmonious
Sound of a chord
Struck upon
The yielding keys
Of a piano.
The fruit
Is the bliss
And contentment
Wrought by faith,
Patience, and respect.

TO A SCIENTIST

You say there is mental telegraphy—
I say it isn't so!
'Cause I love him wildly, madly, passionately
And he doesn't even know!

ONCE

Once Love came to me.
I laughed and bid him flee!
Now I am old and all alone.
Love, please come back to me!

WHAT DO I CARE?

My baby died today. What do I care
If the wind blows in furious gale?
And the rain drops in torrents?—And the moon so
pale
Hides her silvery light? What do I care!
Even if the earth did quiver, I would not shiver!
If the sun said his day was done—I would not care!
If the sky shudders,—lightning tears her in twain
I wouldn't even feel any pain, I would not care!
Nothing that could happen in earth, sky, or sea,
Nothing that could happen anywhere could bother me!
(My soul is dead) What do I care!

A PRAYER TO NIGHT

O Night!

Thou art so glorious, thou art so bright!
Calm all our fears, dry all our tears—
Please, Night.

O Night!

Thou art so restful, thou art so light!
Give us sweet sleep, thy watch, please keep—
Dear, Night.

CHRISTMAS MORN

On a Christmas morn dear Jesus
Came into this world of sin.
In a manger shepherds found him—
There was no room at the Inn.
Lowly, meek, and gentle Jesus
Lying in a cattle stall.
Nowhere from the spacious palace
Was there sent a welcome call.

Prophets long foretold the tidings
Of His birth in Bethlehem;
How the Christ-child, down from Heaven,
Would bring peace to troubled men.
When he came the world was busy,
And His own received Him not.
In a lonely world He wandered,
By too many soon forgot.

Christmas bells—they ring so sweetly!
All the world now seems more bright
Since I let the King of Glory
Fill my heart with Heaven's light.
And the many who receive Him
Join the blest fraternity—
Sons of God—With the assurance
Of a bright eternity.

BROKEN

The bond of friendship, years had formed,
Through one unhappy, hasty word
Is broken.

The heart that beat with love for one
Who showed a cool ingratitude
Is broken.

The vow once made to you, dear heart,
In life's most blissful hour
Is broken.

SOLACE

This has been my solace: that we are young,
And Time shall have a goodly span of years
To heal what summer madness wrought. Among
The moments of despair, the shaming tears,
This thought has peered at me as does the sun
Pierce through the clouds to silver summer rain.
What has been done can never be undone,
'Tis true. But in a later day this pain
May wear itself to dullness so that we,
Thinking it had been part of us always,
Can quite ignore it. Someday it shall be
Fully forgot—unless untutored gaze
Shall fall upon pale lilacs wet with rain,
Or rebel ears attune to old refrain.

STILL

Still do the seasons come and go,
And rivers pass in endless flow
While larks weave songs, and poets rise
To view the world with seeing eyes.

Still do the trees take on new hues,
Ever alert to age old cues;
Still are the fields with flowers spread—
Only my dreams, my dreams, are dead!

I'VE AN UNFINISHED SONG

I've an unfinished song
That no one will borrow,
That no other will sing:
It breaks with my sorrow
And it trills with my joy.
Won't you sing it for me?
I'm so anxious to know
What the ending will be.

THE TEA-WAGON RIDE

A tea-wagon is the nicest thing
To ride around the house,
I do it twenty times a day
As quiet as a mouse.

I make it go so easy-like
Then it will not sing—
'Cause you see, it's mother's
Mostest precious thing.

I sit upon the under shelf
My feet, the floor don't touch,
My hands just push the wheels around—
The steering isn't much.

I have to listen all the time
When Mother's working 'round,
For if she catches me again
She'll spank me good and sound.

LAMENT

My bridge
That curves from birth
To death is far too short
A span to build in beauty all
I wish.

SINGING BROOK

The brook curves swiftly with a song—
Louder as she leaps along;
She sings,

I have no time to play
With slender birches on the way,
Or sturdy fir, or feather brake,
Or any friend of mother lake—
I must rush onward to the sea
For he is calling—calling me.

PACE THE SLOW EARTH

Pace the slow earth, walk tenderly hereon;
This loam has fed on bones of nobler men
Than ever you or I. Although we don
Habiliments in all truth fine, or pen
Sharp, stabbing words to bolster up our pride,
We are grotesques, who mock with shame the worth,
The heritage of blood from whose sweet side
We spring full armed to take the ancient earth.

Walk naked now, or lay you to the ground
To find the patient pulse, the mighty heart
That warms the frosted roots, or catch the sound
Of sap rising up, drawn slowly apart,
Year after year, to show the tender bloom
That, my friend, will be our ultimate doom.

ETCHING

Trees stand up
Bare and spectral,
Under the half-light of the moon.
Trees pierce the gloom
With indifferent mockery.
Moonlight pours itself out
Like frosty, silver wine;
And the night is inundated by it.

MAIDEN

O, you of the lovely breasts,
Shadow tipped,
And the long body undulate
As the patterns of water;
And as fleetingly fragile.
Moon tissue
And ebony.
Stark white birches
Under a flame
Of mauve-umber.

ETCHING

How strange we should have parted in the rain
As if the tears which blurred you from my view
Were all too futile for my heavy grief
Which broke the mourning vase of heaven too.
Spring, frightened at my crashing world, stood still
And wrung her slender hands at my despair,
Her gentle zephyrs changed to sobbing gusts,
The blossoms falling from her scented hair.

I turned one longing, backward glance at you
While heaven and hell and earth drew us apart,
And, oh my dear, the memory of that day
Is etched so deeply in my aching heart
That though I never see your face again
I'll trace your features in each driving rain.

TOAST TO THE LAUGHING CAVALIER
(Rembrandt)

We greet each other every day
This bon vivant and I,
Insouciant knight to modern maid—
We smile when passing by.

However ill the world may go
However dull the sky,
We greet each other every day
This bon vivant and I.

Oh, life is long and love is brief,
He knows it—so do I;
And since we've learned that sorrow fades
But laughter cannot die,
We greet each other every day
This bon vivant and I.

CINQUAIN III

Love stands
In front of me
Urging me to go;
But Hate holds both my hands, and I
Stand still.

THE CONSOLATION IN DEATH

The chilling blast blew up
With ghastly growl and roar,
Passed on the bitter cup
As time has told of yore;
The two the blighting sup
Fast chilled straight to the core.

And

The sting, no man can live
To tell its fatal pang;
But once it'll surely give
To each its piercing fang;
It sifts man as a sieve
And snaps life with a twang.

Yet

Through Death's fraternity
We reach Eternity.

THE MAN WITHOUT LIGHT

I saw a fool
Go running down the road.
He had no light
By which to see his way.

He ran ahead
And made his way along
Using the light
Another man had made.

AT CLOSE OF DAY

The sinking sun at close of day
Adorns with beauty every ray
 It sends across the sky.
Like heralds, leading artist bands
To paint the heavens, at his commands
 The clouds go floating by.

Soft azure tints and rose are blent;
Then purple, fringed with gold, is sent,
 While other clouds draw near
And mingle flaming red with gold;
But soon the colors grow less bold—
 The dimmer shades appear;

And all the lapping waves nearby
Reflect the vari-colored sky
 In ever-changing hue
Until the splendor fades away;
The sky is left a bluish gray
 When stars return to view.

IF SHE KISSED IT, WHO KNOWS?

If she kissed it, who knows?
 But she smiled as she gave it,
This dear little rose.
If she kissed it, who knows
The message that goes
 With her smile? As she gave it,
If she kissed it, who knows?
 But she smiled as she gave it!

A MOMENT

Can I write of it now?
I know not.
The sound of the rain tells me "yes"
As it patters, patters down
On the grey roofs.

I recall it now distinctly,
But can it be
The charm is broken and gone?
Can I capture the spell and sweetness of that moment?
'Twas but a moment.

I gazed through the window that afternoon
Upon a barren oak beside the window.
The sun was shining, and sinking,
And the last rays cast a glow on the barren branches.
And in that moment my heart was glad—
Exalted over something.
Perhaps the music from the radio downstairs
Lent its charm—
I closed my eyes,
And then I looked again.

The sun had sunk!
The tree was there,
But gone the rosy glow!

And my gladness?
I cannot say—
I think it went also,
But something poignant, yet sweet, remained.
And I didn't know whether it was
A glimpse of the Ethereal,
Or just the sunset.

OBLITERATION

The trembling tear
That brims your eye
Is sorrow-dew, my dear.
It glows with all
That ever was
Of hope, and joy . . . and fear.

It gleams above
My very life—
It falters, soon will fall
And take the spark
That glimmers yet—
My soul! that tear takes all.

It sparkles and
Soon it must drop
And ashes will remain
To tell the tale
Of love that died . . .
Lost litany of pain.

AU REVOIR

A day ago you moved and breathed and laughed;
Yet now, a senseless clay, you lie inert.
My friend, I mourn the joy you owned and gave
To all the earth, and not this clammy husk
That jeers at our brief sojourn in the flesh.
O noble spirit! has it perished too?
Is life a bitter riddle, left unsolved?
I will not know that everything must end!
I hold you—in my weary, aching heart.
And when the icy fingers clutch for me,
The time has come when I must shuffle on,
I'll think of your sweet spirit standing off
And gently smiling—when we meet again.

WHEN YOU ARE GONE

When you are gone and can no longer
Bend above me

When you are gone, beyond reclaiming,
And there is nothing more to say.

I shall remember you as leaves remember summer—

When Autumn comes too quickly down—

Wearing the beauty of her passing
As midnight wears her star-sewn gown.

SONNET

If I had known what now I know today—
That Life could strangle truths, and make them dust—
Think you I should have let you have your way,
And called you dear, and wise,—devoid of lust?
Rather would I have had my breath, or yours,
Before you dulled the red flame of my youth,
And barred the exits of my own house-doors,
While I, your willing prisoner, in sooth,
Shuttered with tears your sleek and sunlit head,
Consumed your ardor with my cool, white hands . . .
Now, like the soul of one long since dead,
Wanders throughout lonely ways in foreign lands,—
I who have loved you, move within the night,—
Restless, but free; fearful of dawn and light.

FOR PAULA

Be thou a flame to warm my heart,
A rose for my delight,
A beacon on a distant hill
Through every lonely night.

Oh, be thou everything to me—
A tree, the sky; and rain—
And smite me with swift ecstasy
Of beauty that is pain.

TO THINE EYES

Thine eyes, dear heart,
Undimmed by Time,
Youth's strength impart;
Or, in life's prime,
Still cast their light
On me, so warm.
Just warm? Ah, bright!
Oh, Luna! Astral swarm!
Shine more?—for spite?

ROADS

There are roads and roads that go everywhere;
Some that go up and some that go down.
There are roads to beauty beyond compare;
A road that leads to the mountain's crown.
But—the road that makes hiking well worth while
Is the road to the light in your eyes' warm smile.

Oh, there are roads to the east and roads to the west
And roads on the land and roads on the sea.
There are roads to the places we love best;
A road to a garden for you and me.
But—the road that gives us Love's fine art
Is the road to the Eden in your heart.

There are roads and roads, both mean and fair;
Some that are level and some that are steep.
There are roads that challenge us here and there,
The road that would chasten us, though we weep.
But—the road that makes climbing one grand song
Is the road to your conscience 'twixt right and wrong.

Oh, there are roads to the west and roads to the east;
And roads on the land and roads in the air.
There are roads to the places where sorrows are least.
A road to some haven that is free from care.
But—the road that leads to the perfect goal
Is the road to the shrine within your soul.

THE PLATONIST

I, too, once fondled
Thought with care,
Hoping to find
Eternity there.

I, too, once cherished
Each wayside brook,
Seeking my quiet
In a distant nook.

I, too, had a glimpse
Of a phantom girl,
And we danced together—
A dream-lit whirl.

But I still tingle
To the bells of Hope—
In her fair meadows
There's some slack rope!

TOP-MOST BOUGH

Down from the red display of luminous night
Beneath my arms hangs a darkened void
Where my weaker brothers lament the absence of light,
And curse my leafy boughs, feeling that I destroyed
Their leafy hopes, and snatched from their struggling
sight

That glorious vision of heaven they would have
enjoyed

Had I not stood in the way. Convinced that I toyed
With them in devilish malice, they gather up spite
Against me, and ridicule my towering height.

Yes I diverted the luminous glow they sought,
But, I swear, no malice lurked behind my thought.
I had no choice—the exigence of birth
Drove me arrow upwards oblivious of earth.
Heaven called me. I did my best and fought
My way to the skies, immune to their petty mirth.

FAIRY NIGHTS

Oh, fairies are such busy little sprites
And never seen by day—but pleasant nights
They scrub the skies and sweep the Milky Way
And shine the big round moon and—so they say—

They polish every star until its spark
Shines many million miles down through the dark.
But if you see a falling star spin round
And spill the dizzy skies down to the ground

That means a playful fairy in his fun
Has knocked one off. And then when night is done
And dawn comes creeping, creeping in so slow
(Can Lady Night, I wonder, want to go?)

They slide so quickly down the errand rays the sun
Must daily send to tell them when to run.
All day, curled under milkweed puffs, they sleep—
I never find one, softly as I creep!

FROM MY HOSPITAL WINDOW

Blue sky and a cloud drifting along,
Green trees where birds sing their song,
The drive curving round by the door,
These three from my window, no more,
These I can see.

Cloud, carry me with you, I pray!
Bird, sing to me sweetly all day!
Down the drive my feet want to run
Round the curve toward the setting sun,
Painless and free!

TEMPLES

We pray at man-made altars
To distant gods we fear,
Not knowing that the answer
Is with us now and here.

Closer than our anguish
Is a place where turmoils cease—
An altar of the soul,
A presence and a peace.

We need to lift our eyes
From temples of the sod,
To turn ourselves from symbols
And behold the face of God.

MORE THAN THIS

Out of the void, a cry of pain;
A flash of light, then dark again;
A hope, a tear, a smile, a kiss—
I know that life is more than this.

A body of dust, a machine-like brain;
Hunger and thirst, a greed for gain;
Instincts drawn from time's abyss—
I know that man is more than this.

Hurler of lightning, sender of rain;
Despoiler of His own domain;
Creator of life for death's chalice—
I know that God is more than this.

BEAUTY

Some days are full of beauty—
On the blank side of a building
With regular prim windows
The sun show brilliantly;
And on one ledge stood a queer blue bowl
Of daffodils.

As night came over the mountains
Through the blue mist—
Bare trees stood out against an orange sky.

On the lawn
A slight breeze stirred the quiet
Of midnight blue and silver light of stars.

PLANTATION SUMMER EVENING

Yellow glow behind the black-on-green
Of clear-cut pine trees in the deep'ning dusk;
The misty faintness of the green young cotton.
And water, motionless, reflecting
Fantastic and misshapen, darkened shadows.
The sky above is colorless—not burning blue
Nor angry grey, nor dark blue plush with points of
light.
The world has stopped—the steady hum of insect life
has ceased—
The earth is quiet
And then in a distant cabin
Someone has lit a lamp.

DEATH

The incense is burned
And the ash remains
White—inanimate—
To crumble away at the slightest wind—
But in the air
A faint, sweet odor lingers.

L'ENVOI

Love is dead,
And yet I laugh;
Happier than I have been
In weeks.

I laugh,
And not in mockery.
At last I know
The lightness of heart
That comes when hope is fled,
And nothing matters much
Any more.
Why shouldn't I laugh?
Nothing matters.

I laugh,
Gayly. . . . exuberantly. . . .
My heart is light,—
Because it's empty.

A RUBAI FOR ROSEMARY

"If we should stay
 within the dell,
And spend the night,
 we'd go to hell.
That," said she,
 "I know full well;—
But 'twould be such heaven
 going!"

NOVENA

I have been devout for the last few days,
Burned two large candles to a Saint,
Bent my knee before each shrine,
And worried Heaven with earthly plaint.

With formal phrase, and stilted sentence,
With Ave Marie and Paternoster,
I have prayed that *my* Patron Saint send proof
That my neighbor's Saint is a base impostor.

BERCEUSE

I would give you the globe if I had my way,
To roll like a ball when you learn to play.
From the sun I would fashion a crown for your head,
From a star cut a lantern to light you to bed,
From the moon shape a cradle to hang in the trees,
Sheltered by branches, and rocked by the breeze.
I would fill a great paint box with tints from the skies,
(Though its deepest dark blue could not rival your
eyes.)

I would build you a ship with white clouds for a sail;
And tear up a comet to make you a veil,
To keep for your bridal someday.

All these things I would give you, if only I might;
As it is, I but sit and hold you so tight,
Rock and day dream, with my arms around you,
Wondering—if any—which dream will come true?
Days will pass swiftly, and year follow year,
You must master Life's primer, know joy, suffer fear;
Live to see Beauty in commonplace things,
Which like dull grey cocoons shelter butterflies wings;
Until maybe someday, you will sing my song too
To someone you love, just as Mother loves you—
To a Baby, my dear, of your own.

JOY

Whatever life may bring
In way of joy to me,
My heart can never sing
Except of days that used to be.

And all my dreams must spring
From happy days that used to be,
Though life may seem to bring
Belated joy to me.

ECHOES

Broad sweeps of mountain range
That cry of distance; snow-capped peaks
That shout of freedom . . . these the things
I long to see! The gray
And purple of the desert scene,
Lone cacti reared against the sky
Of molten lead—deep solitude!

For here a man could rest and think
Of all those hectic days of youth,
Without the near echoes!

DEATH

Call him gentle rest,
Ender of all strife.
Say he is the quest—
Reason of all Life;
That he is the King. . . .
More—all things to be;
Call him everything. . . .
He is DEATH to me!

REQUIEM

Dream I loved, you are dead.
Dirges, beat. Prayers, be said.

Shall I flute a tremulous moan?
Shall I sound a somber groan?

Rather let me garner white
Spirit lilies—reap delight

Heaping them above the head
Of my dream—so lovely, dead.

POMPILIA

(Browning's *The Ring and the Book*)

Let the iron bell of the heart clang mournfully:
Pompilia, the dove, trails a broken wing.
Laugh bitterly at life. Tell scornfully,
Life is a storm—foolish the bird that will sing.

Let ice grow black in the heart's desolate place:
Hark Guido tears that snow-soft tenderness.
Life is taloned, to wound such gentle grace,
And hard lust harries that shrinking slenderness.

But look you now! New light, warm-petaled hope!
Sound the heart's lute clearly, vivace, loudly.
The soul of Caponsacci owns the scope
Of a seraph's love, so tilt the low head proudly.

Tilt the head proudly, Pompilias of all times;
Let trumpets of prayer tongue the skies gladly;
For tortured flesh is a mellow harp that chimes
For the virtuoso Love, ecstatically, madly.

A MINISTER'S WIFE

Her too familiar talk of God soon shocked
His friends, as jesting at the Devil did;
And so she learned to keep her gay lips locked,
Her heresies beneath decorum hid.
Her feet, that used to dance, now walked along
As straitly as the deacons' wives directed,
For many things she had not thought were wrong
Were labeled worldly when they were inspected.
She barred frivolities for the example,
Yet love of fun escaped at crevices;
But when small, husky sons began to trample
Her fragile strength, she gave up levities.
They would have thought her heathen had she said
That God grew dim for her, with laughter dead.

ON RECEIVING A COPY OF ELINOR WYLIE'S
"COLLECTED POEMS"

Here are the brave translunary things that Drayton
Said were in Marlowe and the first poet,—
Fire from the chariot wheels of Phaeton,
Whirled upon the moon's crust and below it.

The silken heifer on the Urn (Keats' Grecian)
Has not a flank that's smoother than a word is;
A crystal deer, deep antlered and Venetian,
Is not more finely spun than lucent phrases.

Here is the bitter kernel split and tasted;
Here is tartar, where the wine has stood;
Here is pity that had gladly wasted
Paradise upon the left hand rood.

Between these spread blue wings with silver tips,
Burns Patmos and apocalypse.

SUICIDE

And if this was a dream—
he was the dreamer
standing
trembling
on portals of floorlessness.

Time was nothing—
and yet. . . .

a single moment pushed his feet!

DARKNESS IS RICH SOIL

Darkness is rich soil
in the garden of stars,
inexhaustible soil. . .

soil that is
like the soil of earth—
caused by decay. . .

only in the garden of stars
; worlds decay.

ONE CONQUERING MOOD

His face, in death,
was like a battleground
where moods lay starkly slain.

One conquering mood alone escaped.

Humor,
stepping off in space,
left a fixed ironic grin
upon his face.

ABOVE THE BLUE SKY

Above the blue sky there is life:
Not only the fittest here survive.
All beings are treated fairly and kindly
In this home of merriment and felicity.

Above the blue sky there is joy:
Bright light gleams without alloy.
It is a delightful place for all; we—
Rich or poor, old or young—can be happy.

Above the blue sky there is hope;
For every man who wants to go.
There's no one here who'd cheat or dupe;
It is a place of fellowship without woe.

Above the blue sky there is real equality,
Sincere and absolute love and fidelity.
How lucky are those found worthy
To live in that happy home of beauty!

Above the blue sky there is peace;
Amity and friendship among all never cease;
And if the same were to be on Mother Earth
People would live with ease and mirth.

Above the blue sky there is contentment.
Dwellers receive exactly what they want.
How I long to live above the blue sky
Where no one is judge as low or high.

Above the blue sky there shall be mercy
For those who ask forgiveness of the Almighty.
Oh, may I not misuse my freedom and liberty!
Father, lead me; give me not a severe penalty.

DISCOVERY

But yesterday, I thought that we had found
All treasures held by earth, because our quest
For beauty took us through the bitter test
Of life, and brought us to some throbbing sound
Of music, and to words all woven 'round
With loveliness, that seemed to me the best
Of beauty. I forgot that sweet unrest
Forever is within us, makes us bound
To search for treasures always; yet rejoice
In this, that each new day will be a day
For you and me to seek and find the things
We love; each day, a day to make a choice
Among life's gifts, and, selfishly, to say,
"For us alone, the wonders beauty brings."

ROUNDEL ON A MUSIC-BOX

My music-box sings of a time long-forgotten and gone;
A picture of ladies and gentlemen dancing, it brings;
Of elegant garden, and formally landscaped lawn,
My music-box sings.

It tinkles a song of romantic and magical things,
Lovers in satin and jewels and lace, dancing on,
While night flies away on velvety, star-studded wings.

I almost see lanterns and flowers, a fountain, a faun,
And hear the gay laugh of a coy *demoiselle*, as it rings;
Of frivolous flirting, and revelry lasting till dawn,
My music-box sings.

RUINS

Once upon this barren shore
Rude homes the Russ and Aleut built
Of sea-worn boulders, sand, and silt;
And on the birds and fur-seal herds
Made wide and heartless war.
Long since, the Northman went his way;
Yet on the isle, near Tower Bay,
Where slopes the shore from Tower Hill,
His ruined huts are standing still;
And from the cleft and moss-grown walls,
Elusively, the rock-wren calls
To coward winds, as on they flee,
Whistling wild in dreary key,
And through the rifts the sun-fays dazzling play,
Or pallid, sleepy moon-folk stray
In chill and silent mystery.

SEA-FOLK

From this basin's rugged edge
In the limpid depths peer wide and deep
Where lolling tides lie half asleep.
Sea-forms, strange, will venture o'er
The weed-grown, creviced, glassy floor.
In the quivering depths now dimly glides
A snake-like eel 'neath wavering ledge;
Here shroud-like, silent, weird and slow,
Translucent creatures, come and go
As strange as dream-forms curious flow.
And glittering in metallic mail,
And swift propelled by ancient oar,
The finny barges proudly sweep;
Here urchin-fleets with fairy sail,
Cruise with tides when zephyrs fail,
And beyond the surges' flying spray
The serpent-kelp ever swim and sway,
Blind captives of eternal tides.

THE PHILOSOPHER

The world is not sixty by ninety
With a bungalow roof overhead
But is as wide as the souls of those
Met on the hills of life,
And as deep as the trust
That is measured
In a mutual understanding glance.

MOINA MICHAEL
(*The Poppy Lady*)

She holds on high
The Flander's Torch,
And in its light
Are planted wide
The poppy seeds—
That keep a faith
That must not die.

Men reborn
From shattered threads
Are marching again
In the ranks of men,
And poppies red
Renew a pledge—
November morn.

SPRING IN CAROLINA

When lovely blue violets
And laughing daffodils,
Dance in the spring
I would be home
In Carolina.

The spring now brings
A poignant lonesomeness
For golden days
With a blue, blue mist,
In Carolina.

BEACON LIGHTS

Beacon lights are flashing
Slender fingers through the sky.
Far, far, away I watch them
As through the sky at night time
Their long white beams they ply;
Here, there, above the zenith of the hills
Their shafts
For an instant gleam.
Here, there, again they come—
The light shafts of the beacons
Flashing in the sky.

AT TWILIGHT

And the moon rose up at twilight
Giving promise to the night
Of a cheering silver light;
From the mellow clouds it came,
And set them all aflame
With its glow.
And the clouds upon the moon
Turned it silver-lemon hue
As they flecked across it's face
In their swift cloud race
Through the sky.

BY SUN AND SHADE

A patchwork pattern dances
On the grasses 'neath the trees,
For the elfin winds of summer
Whisper through the leaves.
Here and there they scamper
Playing tag with one another,
Tracing many lacy patterns
On the pathway 'neath the trees.

FOR A VERY NEW ANGEL

Tonight's the very first, dear Lord,
I did not tuck her in,
I did not hear her baby prayers
Nor kiss her dimpled chin.

Tonight's the very first, dear Lord,
She hasn't slept near me;
O, please, in mercy, light a star
That she'll not timid be!

Tonight's the very first, dear Lord,
She'll miss my lullaby;
Perhaps your choir of angel voices
Knows my rock-a-bye?

Tonight's the very first, dear Lord,
Familiar ways she'll miss;
Perhaps a silver moonbeam could
Pretend it was my kiss?

DEATH

Straight from the womb unto the gate
of Death, led by the hand of Fate
we go. But who shall say of Death
that we are dead and not the breath
of Immortality? We know
that we are born and that we go
to final sleep. Eternity?
Oblivion? Which will it be?
I fear that we shall never know
Until we too, are dead, for lo!
Those gone are perished in the earth
Or live forever by rebirth.

THE PRAIRIE MOTHER

I am the prairie mother
Sitting alone,
Holding
 Toil,
 Sunshine, and
 My young son
In the gnarled grasp of weary hands.

I SHALL USE MY MEMORIES

I shall use my memories
Of you,
As a trapeze on which
To cling,
While swinging, swinging
To another.

THE STRAND

Stars last night
Were crystals
Overhead.
Oh, that I could pierce
Their brilliancy
Around a golden thread,
And string my beads
Of majesty,
Of red!

BLIND

I must be blind,
 For spring has come they say;
And oft I answer as of yore,
 "Yes—yes, a pretty day—"

I must be blind,
 To new-born beauty all around;
A crushed and bleeding heart
 Keeps sad eyes bound.

TO JOHN KEATS

The seeds you sowed are breaking through;
No more beguiling Beauty knocks in vain.
The soul's fair flowers, unfolding into view,
Now draw from what you left as from the rain.

THREE HOKKUS

Ephemeral foam
The sea makes on timeless rock.
Am I rock . . . or foam?

Comfort brings content;
Certainty, oiled existence.
I seek myself, life.

Tuscarora Deep—
But it has been sounded now.
Am I not deeper?

THE MIRAGE

On a coal-black stallion rides Greed
Pursued by the nations. . . .
In his hand are phantoms only:
Baubles of desire,
Bubbles that burst
When the deluded hordes would clasp them.

Yet this mirage that glitters real
Pulls the nations into the pit!
The multitudes, so eager,
Trample underfoot their brothers.
Chaos has come. . . .

THE ROSE THAT MOURNED

Outside a garden fence a wild rose bloomed
 With dainty dower
Of blush and fragrance, yet she mourned away
 Each passing hour
Since early morn when, tempted, she peeped through
 The garden bar
To see the radiance of a rich red rose,
 Its scent flung far.

Unto a friendly breeze which brushed her leaves
 She thus made moan,
"Oh, better far for me had I been born
 A stick or stone,—
Could I but know some mortal gave to me
 The smallest part
Of admiration given yon royal rose
 'Twould calm my heart."

Lingered the gentle breeze and to her said
 In cadence sad,
"Better, my humble friend, to yearn to make
 Some mortal glad."
At this rebuke the wild rose hung her head
 A drop of dew
Fell in her heart and murmured, "Do not mourn,
 There's work for you."

And in a humble home that very hour
 Upon the breast
Of one who quiet lay she found a place
 And was at rest.
The gentle breeze stole in when night and rose
 Were both far spent,
"How now?" he asked. The dying rose replied,
 "I am content!"

FIRST LOVE

I give you back your gifts,
Even to the memories of roses;
And I release you from your promise,
Though you gave it yourself to endure forever.
I ask only that you return to me three things:
The meaning of the hush just before dawn,
My laughter,
And my virginity.

THE HAG

Life is an old woman
Whose skin is wrinkled
And whose body is sagging and scarred from too much
child-bearing.
From that body have come men and women
Who have forgotten the one who carried them in her
womb
And fed them from her breasts.
But the old woman is not bitter,
And her scolding tongue
Does not efface the tenderness which lies ever within
her sunken, weary eyes.
She dreams, when she is alone;
And her dreams are all of her youth,
When she was beautiful, and her laughter reached the
stars.
Occasionally she whispers, "My lover,"
In a voice that is harsh and racked with pain.
But she is so old that she does not remember
Whether she speaks of one she knew
Or one who never came.

GOBLIN WINE

I have drunk goblin wine from your dear lips!
My soul is mist, and I am mad with pain
That knows no peace save that I drink again!
I have forgotten all I ever knew;
I have forsaken all I once held dear;
My mind is void but for the name of you
Beating in ceaseless waves of fire that sear
And scorch my heart in breaking on its shore.
I have drunk goblin wine from your dear lips—
Ah, give me one drink more!

INADVERTENTLY TRUTH SLIPS

Inadvertently truth slips
Sometimes from my guarded lips
And your look of shocked surprise
Warns me I have not been wise.
Some minds do not want to see
Beyond their own timidity!
Ah, well, truth's a scorching fire—
I must be a better liar.

FOLLY'S CHOICE

You would have me pace behind a cloistered wall
Of grey conventionality, and tell my beads
With listless fingers,
Murmuring outworn Latin creeds
Through pale, pressed lips!
But I must heed the call
That bids me hasten to the market place
To meet and love my fellows face to face;
To laugh and dance and weep and drink life's brim-
ming bowl,
And sing the worldly songs you urge me to forget!
You call it folly. Well, perhaps it is, and yet—
A cap and bells may hide more wisdom than a cowl!

THE INFINITE

There are mountains man never will master,
And deserts that creep to his bones,
There are oceans that roll him to Rio,
Or snow banks that smother his groans.

Let philosophy tender its fancies;
Let science adhere to her creed;
There are questions man never will answer,
And answers he never will need.

AFTER DEATH

Sift the ashes down;
Spray the earth of brown.
White doves have flown;
Dark winds have blown.
Nothing has grown—
Sift the ashes down.

TO MAURICE RAVEL

Behold a man who dares to scorn convention,
Who calls the passing styles for what they are;
Behold a man who, in profound expression,
Transports the mortal to the mystic star.

Scorned by the blind,
Who can not see,
Who can not find
His ecstasy,
Ravel portrays
A demon's roll,
And madly sways
My fiendish soul.

APRIL MORNING

The tyrannical rain
The growing eddies in the little bush bordered pool
The irregular yet symmetrical patterns on the pane
Spring's doubtful promise in every leaf and blade
The infectious beckoning of the glistening ribbon that
 is the highroad
The surprising hush as the rain drifts into a soft mist
The soggy stripped awnings where birds converse
The exhilaration of the east wind as the rain fades
 with the passing of a cloud
The inadequacy of books
Streaks of red and grey for houses banks
 of green for trees
A new, mysterious blue in the grey morning smoke
Automobile tires singing on glistening pavements
Winter's quiet content dissipated by a gnawing wander-
 lust
Poet's paradise
Painter's paradise
A strange carol in a new born heart akin only to
 love
The awing realization that possibly it might be love
Sun's triumphant procession to the pinnacle
His largess of myriad dancing lights
People's voices far away
Bird's voices very near
Poet's paradise
Painter's paradise
 April Morning.

THE ICE AGE

There's no time now for gentle words
Or Christian loving-kindness;
The world grows colder every day,
And fiercer in its blindness.

We few that work to keep a fire
Against the world's great winter
Must use whatever wood we may,
Down to the last sharp splinter.

Beat down the hands that dare protect
Their ikons from our seizing.
Shall any deadwood hold respect
When half the world is freezing?

TRAPPED

The way is broken,
The path is gone.
Where once we passed
Is a fallen stone.

May we not fall
To giving ear
To words of doubt
Or to cries of fear.

We, who have spurned
The full daylight
To grope for gauds
Better out of sight,

We can but hope
That once again
Fortune shall prove
Kindlier than men.

INTIMACY

Not lips nor hands—
Touch leaves me cold,
Again a beggar at the door of flesh,
When the whole tale of sense is told—

But wit and word.
Lovers may find
A hidden intimacy fiercer still;
Love is a passion of the mind.

CERTAINTY

When I look out upon the stars,
I cannot know
If they are stars or falling light
Of suns cooled long ago.

Then I perceive the dying world,
My self, may be
Persistent lights and shadows of
Bygone reality.

NOVEMBER

Now the great mother, virgin in the spring,
But lately of her harvests brought to bed,
Has listened to the season's whispering,
And changed her garments for the maple's red,
The brown of oaks, the purple of the ash;
Boldly she dons the elm-tree's yellow veil,
Till for her harlotry she feels the lash.
She lies beneath the keen November gale,
Whose cruel fingers strip her robes away;
His biting kisses leave her withered, bare,
Brown-skinned and old, her rags of hair turned gray,
Crouched numb and shivering in the frosty air.
Soon earth, beset with snow and clinging sleet,
Lies white and still in winter's winding-sheet.

THE RAINBOW

Violet, evanescently soft
As mist tinted morning,
Or palm shaded isle on the tropic horizon
Across a pearly hazy sea.

Indigo, deep, lazy blue,
As cloud shadows hanging on far distant pines,
Or depths in the foam crested waves.

Blue, azure blue,
As the vault of the sky's overarched bowl,
Or the light in the cave of Capri.

Green, restful green,
As fresh growing wheat fields in Spring,
Or richly carved jade of Cathay.

Yellow, sulphurous yellow,
As fields with buttercups pied,
Or the goldenrod's wide spreading range.

Orange, ruddily glowing,
As metal in flow from the furnace,
Or sunlit sands of tawny Sahara.

Red, sweepingly red,
As richly robed Cardinal,
Or the sky's crimson glow at sunseting time.

White, silvery white as bleached cotton that
Runs through the hands of the spinner
With heaven's colors of sky, cloud and forest
Skilfully mixed on the sun's palette of light,
Silvery as rays of the Moon,
Or the shimmering strand of a far away coast.

IF THIS SHOULD BE

If there should sometime come a day
 When grudging answer to a smile I give,
 And kindly thoughts within me cease to live,
When I shall see a gracious act and turn away,
And with a frown bruise all things gay,
 Then, Infinite Pity, you will see me thus
And take the spark that's me, the rest to dust.

If there should come a night with magic filled,
 When naught of beauty in a star I see,
 Or blind to trees in silvery mist,
To see in someone's eyes love slowly killed,
 And hold but thoughts of man's mortality,
 Then, oh God, be kind, grant death's cold kiss.

BAFFLED DREAMER

Poor baffled dreamer, you who dreamed
The sky a warm bowl, arched it seemed
Protectingly o'er man and lesser things,
And who to nature's truths did cling,
Now find the sky but space and cold immensities
And nature tired, given to strange fantasies.

Sad awakened dreamer, such drear reality
To face, what iconoclastic one did make
Of life a complex thing to which you have no key?
Temples robbed and from your mind did take
A flame, far reaching to all eternity.
Destroying these that you might see reality.

But dreams for you are never lost,
Now shadowed perhaps, but not the dust
You feel they are, nor faiths not lost.
Reality gives more to us than crusts
To feed upon, and some starry night, or hush of dawn
You'll find new dreams, new faith to bear you on.

HEALING

The snow is falling
In white silence—
Like minutes
It covers the scars of earth
As time
Dims pain
And blurs memories
Into beauty.

CHANGE

Love
Was once a singing stream
Silvered with light.
Now
It is black running satin
Star-shot by night.

CITY MUSIC

The thin black wires
Stretched against the night sky
Are a celestial clef
Holding music
Made of silent silver stars.

VESPERS

Sunset
And the chimneys
Stand like black candles
Against the flaming altar
Of the God of Machinery.

HAIL

Last night
The wind
Turned the still symphony of snow
Into white jazz.

NOCTURNE

Have you heard the whippoorwill at dusk
And felt the loneliness in his cry?
Has the echo lingered in your heart
Although you knew not why?

Have you seen the moon hung low in the sky,
A golden lantern lighting the night?
Have you seen the stars twinkling merrily
Like myriad fireflies in flight?

I sit alone by my cabin door;
Strange, I haven't noticed these things before.

DAYBREAK

Dawn springs to birth from the womb of the night
And triumphantly mounts to the sky;
The shadows retreat from the growing light,
A defeated army in headlong flight
When the van of the enemy is nigh.

It sings a song in the voice of a lark
Whose joyous notes greet the coming day;
And the rising sun, like a flaming bark
On a red-gold sea, sails out of the dark:
The night is vanquished and the morn holds sway!

Wake! ye sluggards, the night has passed;
Drink in the morn for it cannot last.

TEMPEST

Child of the temple am I,
Born of the night;
Born of the high wild winds that sweep
Life's by-ways . . . winds that cry
In the darkness deep—
I am kin to the stormy night,
Kin to the lashing tempest that holds me tight
In the dark pools of despair—
In the chill and fearsome lair
Where the wild winds sleep;
Child of the tempest am I,
Born of the night.

BEGGAR

Like a ragged beggar outside the city gates,
I grasp eagerly coins you have left from spending;
Hoarding the little coins you lightly toss me
Against the stark necessity of each day's ending.

Others would be kind but you are only cruel;
(None is so great a fool as he who will not see)
Hunger grim and terrible steals sleep from my pillow,
So if I must know hunger, at least I will be free.

HARVEST

I stood upon the threshold
Of life—youth was at the dawning;
I plowed a crooked furrow
Nor heeded a word of warning—
The seed I sowed there flourished
In the noontime of my years;
I thought I sowed gay laughter
But my harvest was of tears.
I sowed my seed of laughter
But garnered only weeping—
The soil was rich and fertile
And oh, the bitter reaping.

HIS ROUTE AND MINE

As round about my route I walk today,
At times I find the routine weary to my soul
But if I search, I'll find a brighter ray,
A pious thought has caused the gloom to roll.

What of the weary route He trod for me?
What of the scoffs and jeers He suffered too?
What of the Nails that held Him to the Tree?
What of the desolation that He knew?

Ah! then how can my spirit so complain?
What can my selfish soul desire?
How can I grudge to bear some little pain?
And why do I so easily tire?

It is because I do not hold His Hand
It is because the Vision I do lose,
But now beneath His Banner I will stand
And His shall be the Way that I will choose.

His royal route, His only Way
No more the easy path desire
And He shall lead me every day
Then on the route I'll never tire.

WEARY HUMAN

In the morning I arise from restless sleep
To face another day.
Another day of worry, work and endless strife
The same as yesterday.
Of plodding city pavements, in search of what?
Something that does not exist; nor you nor I
Can call its name.

A hopeless quest; I think I'm hunting happiness
But when that's found, I'm yet unsatisfied.
I'm searching once again
For the answer to life's Mystery.
But I have lost before I start—'tis but a hopeless
search,
Because there is no answer.

I scurry all the day, know not nor caring why
A human ant
In a vast hill that's of my kind.
We are all alike, and could some great eye
Look down on us from some great height, and see
That eye would wink
At the unreasonable rush of human kind.
And when at night I climb my stairs
In my tired brain
A thought evolves, that I am a poor fool
To rush the way I do
The while I'm only passing time in life
That would well pass without my heedless rush.

And then I close my eyes to rest my weary self
That I may have the strength
To spend another day
Pounding pavements, speeding highways
Scurrying senselessly about
In hopeless quest of
What?

IN A GARDEN NOOK

I took my book one Autumn day
To read beneath the trees
Where the dahlias by the garden wall
Were nodding in the breeze.

With every gust of the whispering wind
The leaves came down in showers
And the bees came there to gather honey
From the fragrant flowers.

I found I did not want to read
In this little garden nook
I would rather watch the butterflies
Than read a printed book.

THE LONELY SHEPHERD

Out in the dreary western hills
A shepherd guards his sheep,
Beyond, the snow-capped Rockies rise
And shade the canyons deep.

In the evening he sits by his cabin door,
In the sunsets crimson glow,
Watching the color fade from the sky
And darkness hide the snow.

He knows no land but the mountains and hills
No home but his cabin small
No friends but his dog and the bleating sheep,
And the pine trees green and tall.

The old shepherd has few earthly needs
This much about life he knows
He brought nothing with him into this world
And takes nothing away when he goes.

I SIT UPON MY BROKEN TOMB

I sit upon my broken tomb and see
The years ascend the dusky minaret
Of time, where I once burned with brevity
The candle of my life before death set
Her snuffing fingers on mortality.
Still does the incense of man's dust mount fast
To silent gods, and with finality
Each single flame is gutted out at last.
The Hand that closed my tomb has broke its seal,
To let me crawl the earth again and knot
These hours with prayer; take back the gift, I pray;
The mortal pain of life has gnawed me hot
With grief forgot on death's unturning wheel,
And I have borne its ageless weight this day.

HOMeward

The languid day leans closely on the west
And through the murmurous pause of eventide
I see the fleeting swallows homeward ride
In winging journey toward the cliff's dark crest.
So I would come to you, O one loved best,
And pausing on the hill's long golden side
Behold your doorway standing near, and wide
For love and me to enter as one guest.
For when all journeyings of earth are done,
And wonderous delight grows sharp and thin,
When stars have lost their first tempestuous fire,
The soul grows weary of its own bright sun,
And only asks that it shall briefly win
The quiet refuge of its heart's desire.

LUCIFER IN SUNLIGHT

Through molten seepage, clod by broken clod,
Up from the depths, the foul-breathed smouldering
dearth,
Came Lucifer, the traitor to his God,
And leaned his ebon wings against the earth.
How still and cool it was—divinely cool!
Close by the whisper of a water-fall
Splashed to the silence of a mountain pool
Reflecting Heaven's blue. A low bird-call
Was answered with soft ripples of content
Flung from the safety of a valiant nest.

The dark wings quivered, and the dark head bent
One moment to an undefiant breast;
Two great tears fell from sombre brooding eyes
That once, undimmed, had mirrored Paradise!

TO A FAINT HEART

O most disconsolate, so weary grown,
What poisoned alchemy has matched your stride
To the dull plodding of the leaden-eyed?
Is it too far, the levelled plains, dust-blown?
And watch the morning break in wreathes of light—
The waiting hush, the flame—the ecstasy—
That crowns the instant of eternity!

COME, MY OWN!

Come my Own, and walk with me
Through yonder sleepy cemetery!
I love its shaded, flowery paths
And gentle hills, the stalwart oaks
And softly singing brook which guard
The dreams of long-forgotten folks.
Not on perfume-laden nuptial bed
Or through some quickly murmured words
By priest shall I become thine own;
But 'mid the music of the birds,
With God and skies in holy witness,
Shall I surrender. Ever present death,
Constant reminder, will only make
More sweet each rapturous living breath.
Come, my Own, and walk with me
Through yonder sleepy cemetery!

AD VALOREM

See, on this page is where one reads how Antony,
Caught in the spell of Cleopatra's glowing eyes,
Deserted his men to die by Octavian's hosts—
(Are your eyes brown or green?—I never could
apprize!)

And here's the bold explorer, Columbus,
As he planted the Spanish flag, the sign
Of conquest o'er doubt and fear, in the New World—
(Discovery supreme when your lips met mine!)

Read you how Napoleon conquered and
Wormed his mighty way till, emperor crowned,
He sought to hold the world within his grasp—
(I, once so free, in you my King have found!)

Civilizations rise and fall; puppets
Parade in endless sequence. (But, no more!
Of what concern a dead humanity
To me? I've a living sovereign to adore!)

SONNET

Across the grey-green meadow, up the hills,
I ran, with hasty feet, to greet the spring,
And tried to raise my voice with joy, and sing
And purr, like little trickling, waking rills,
Whose springtime murmur all the valley fills;
And throw my heart out, with a happy fling,
That I might hold to nature as a thing
That overleaps the false, that hurts and kills.

And pray for guidance and a better part
In this great agony of throbbing life,
With many contradictions, vain and rife
To stay the trembling hand and frightened heart,
Seeking to live and know, away from strife,
A life—free from dissembling and apart.

APRIL

I stood upon a wind-swept rainy hill
In March, and let her savagery run through
My hair. Her loud voice with its singing shrill
Called over barren wastes, and yet how true
Came underlying music in her strain
Of bitterness, and cold throughout the night;
She seemed to fight and struggle to obtain
Something to make her darkness turn to light.
And then—the early morning brought the face
Of April; and March with blinding tears had gone.
Oh month of violets you have now begun
Your taunting play of fickle tears and sun.

A CHALLENGE

To look life squarely in the eyes
With steady gaze; to falter not but choose
That noble part, the part which lies
Above life's cheap unfairness. To refuse
In thought and word and deed to compromise
With evil cunning, artful schemes and ruse—
Always to love the truth, the wrong despise,
And know that this is gain with naught to lose—

The soul thus charted wins a happy port
Uninjured and unharmed. The winding course
May lead thro' wind-tossed waves, the tempest's sport
May lash a storm-swept deck, and hoarse
Gale-mutterings fill the air. A noble sort
The craft which stems the tide; a noble force
The faith which stands like battered fort,
Calm and serene, safe-anchored in its Source.

MUSINGS

Why should I care while journeying here
Through glorious days and star-lit nights,
If suddenly so faint, yet clear,
A voice should call me from the sights
I've known and loved, and strangely moved
With tenderness should softly say:
"Thy task is done, thy work approved."
Why should I ask another day?

If I have tilled a patch of ground
Through summer suns and made it bloom,
If I have lived my life and found
A kindly way to lessen gloom,
And cheerfully my part have done
When burdens came to lift my share—
If Earth is lost and Heaven won,
Why should I grieve, why should I care?

FALSENESS OF THE DESERT

He dug in the sand and he found naught but chert—
He followed a rainbow on sun-blasted desert.
The sun sank behind a desolated knoll;
The wanderer left his bright camp fire to stroll.

He lingered a moment in a ledge's lee;
His gaze swept the vastness for sight of a tree;
The twilight was to him now peaceful and sweet—
His moment of freedom from torrid sun's heat.

He gloomily thought of the sad fate at hand:
His bones would soon rot in the shifting sand.
In silence he heard the dull song of man's fate;
The wind's low voice whispered, "You've waited—too
late."

His days were now numbered in Time ever-fleet,
In falseness the desert took his youth all to weet.
His scanty provisions reduced to a gobbet;
The last of his water, a canteen of sherbet.

The sunset was hot, a beautiful sanguine:
He visioned his home with its rivers and vine.
He was born in great luxury; here he'll decay—
The desert is not for man, or denizens of the day.

The jewels of the desert from far always shone
But though he did follow them, they always were gone.
The desert's only good for an eagle to soar
Above the bleak wastes where the wind does not roar.

EVENING ON THE DOCK

There's a voice within me that answers the voice of
the wind

When I walk alone on the dock.

The tang of the sea and the smack of the breeze

Quicken my step as I stroll across the planks

Above the lapping, swishing waves.

There is nothing here that is beautiful, yet all of it is
beautiful to me.

The fish house, the boatshop, the fishermen's shacks,

All are dilapidated, ugly to the eye,

Yet all awaken chords within my soul

That make me wish to sing for joy.

Long rows of nets hung over wooden racks,

Flat barges heaped with oyster shells,

Old boats of every kind hitched everywhere;

What is there in this poor, disorderly array

That grips my heart and makes me dream

Of great adventures on the unknown seas?

All is so quiet now at eveningtide,

Although I know confusion will be here

As soon as daylight comes again.

Barefooted fishermen will leave before the dawn

To earn their livelihood from out the deep.

The trucks and cars will clatter over loosened planks

And shouts of firm command will rend the air;

Yet there is music in it all for me.

But this is evening, all is peace

And shafts of orange-gold diffuse themselves

Upon the deep Caloosahatchee's crest.

The ferry boats toss restlessly beside the dock

As if they wished to sail a molten sea.

And I, watching the clouds in their prismatic glow,

Find myself singing an unknown song

That pulsates with the dashing of the waves.

WAYSIDE SHRINE

The long road is coming to an end.
How beautiful, how cool it was!
The green branches of pecan trees
Completely hid the blue sky above.

Look, there, near that fig tree.
What is that white, tomb-like thing?
How quaint—a wayside shrine,
The figure of an unknown saint within.

Do not laugh, too-knowing traveler,
At the poor offerings of wild flowers.
Do not smile with your worldly lips
At the shining metal *milagros*.

They were placed there by loving hands,
Carrying with them trusting, simple souls.
It would not be bad if you too knelt,
And uttered a prayer to some god.

TO FRIENDSHIP AND LOVE

Where friendship ends and love begins
There stands no marked line.
The thing that's pure to the spirit leans,
And all that is true is fine.
There are many kinds of love down here—
Some not wholly approved by man;
But true love is forever clean and clear,
So love, love while you can.
All you who love, go now, hold hands,
And dance before the queen of love.
No orgiastic music by clanging bands;
Be as simple as Venus there above.
Raise your cup, if you be a lover or a friend;
Drink to friendship, to love, one beginning, no end.

HEAVENLY HALF-HOUR

Moments go by on smoothest wings that trackless
nothing spoil,
So like a velvet butterfly or a glowing star,
And irritations of the world have lost their power to
foil
The peace which shines to warm our lives as from the
sun afar.

JAPANESE PRINT

Pale blue mountains, etched against the sky,
Dimly mirrored in a blue lake lie,
Blurred with surface silver that gently glows.
Around the shore, the soft white mist, turned rose,
Upward floats, through pines all sunward drawn,
Vanishes, in upper air of dawn.

WINDY NIGHT
(Partial Eclipse)

The moon was like a slave-ship
In a heaving sea,
And her bloody blackened crew
Rocked tumultuously!

The wind moaned with a warning cry,
Clouds were windswept—dark;
The moon careening rode the sky—
A drunken, found'ring bark!

And fearful for the lives aboard
The good ship going down,
I cried aloud in deadly fear—
“God save them ere they drown.”

EXPLORER DISCOVERED

Night holds
The key of Song
In souls of men, rim-tipped
To twist the key at Dawn, and step
Within.

ODE TO NIGHT

The tangerine glimmers of city lights
Stumble in ecstasy,
Taunt . . .

Like the limpid curve of lissom fingers
Fragments of filigree
Shudder . . .
Lost.

Ah, from the velvet stillness of your body
Emerge, Tarantella!

The rapid swirl of your soul
Entices . . .

And I, who tang of your arms,
Lilt of your throat,
Wrapped in your throat,
Fling your hair to the dusk!

Lone figure in the oasis of wind
Night, on your heaving breast I sing;
With flickering horn in far-flung hand,
Stand firm above the sacred sand,
And lo,
I blow!

RESOLVE

I shall not compromise with puny things,
But think of efforts, anguish, great travail,
Of evolutionary ravagings
That grip all life within this earthly vale.

I think of marvels that entrance the soul,
The heavens, suns—grand, lovely, teeming earth;
But cosmic toil could win such mammoth goal,
Could bring such wild-eyed Master-dream to birth.

To capture greatness effort must be great,
The world must ever groan and sweat with pain,
And men must suffer, build and recreate—
Heroic deeds demand a super brain.

With giant chisel I shall charge the soil,
Wrest beauty, wisdom through the throes of toil.

HELL'S EVANGELIST

I share the wits of mighty Beelzebub,
Of spirits that carouse in flames of hell,
For they can wield a vitriolic club,
For cunning they can have no parallel.

They teach me how to speak in mocking rhyme,
Defy the elements, and beasts, and man,
To laugh at death, and thunder, tyrant time,
Man's imbecilic wisdom—preaching clan.

I tell you, puppets, lay your sorrows down,
Dream not of blue and lofty heaven's glow—
Malignant splendor, glory and renown
Exude from depths and spirits far below.

I was in heaven; God was fast asleep.
I went to hell and found there all His sheep.

BIRTH OF A SONG

Subconscious staccatos
Flash swords,
And from the emitting sparks
A foreign lilt is jangled;
Demonstrated
A song classic.

HORIZONS

I love horizons that stretch long and low
To far distant countries in mystery glow;
I love night horizons, so looming and dark
The swerve and the dip of a great mountain range.
The beauty of dawn—over trees like a hedge
With sun splintered gold, as it lifts from their edge.
The sunset horizon on calm mirrored streams
That paints them in colors like pale rainbow dreams;
I love night horizons, so looming and dark
That breathe of adventure, blood curdling and stark;
Horizons inspiring, horizons that bar
But horizons for me—have a beckoning star.

IS DEATH LIKE THAT?

Slow, like a white bird
Soaring away in the dusk;
Its form growing smaller and smaller
Until it is swallowed up
In the darkening night.
Or is it a hasty exit—
Like a candle
Quickly snuffed out?

SCIOTO

River trail, snake trail, silver black it shines,
Winding through the cities and the green, bright
 meadows,
Winding to the far hills blue with sun and shadows,
On to the hills of the laurels and the pines.

White green, rose green, yellow, brown and grey,
Slow they rise, the far hills, with soft, round shoulders,
Rise with peak and knob and overhanging boulders
On to the south in the snake trail's way.

River trail, snake trail winding through the hills,
Let me follow after, follow your black winding
Far above the river, for its beauty blinding
Draws me like a loadstone home to the hills.

SONG OF WINTER WINDS

I sing the song of the winds
That race with the driving snow,
The shrill, gay song of the winds
That bellow and laugh as they blow:
The mighty winds of the east
That howl in the midnight sky,
The wild, white winds of the north
That roar with rage as they fly.

I sing the song of the winds
Whose teeth are a two edged knife,
Whose laughter is old as the sun,
Whose breath is the joy of life;
The bitter, cruel winds of the west,
Mad winds that whistle and shout,
The strong running song of the winds
Of magic and freedom and rout.

I sing the song of the winds
That race with the driving snow,
The bellowing song of the winds
That sing and laugh as they go.

SUNSET AT GRAND CANYON

Down in the Canyon's depths such silence broods
That even human breathing seems affront
To nature—when herself has muted sound.

The river, far below, Time's etching tool
That deep has graved upon the breast of Earth
A scene transcending far all human art,
Flows soundless on its journey to the sea.

Beyond the farther rim the setting sun
With living fire outlines the distant hills,
While down the Canyon's sides there slowly creep
The mystic shadows of the coming night
Veiling in filmy folds of amethyst
Titanic bulks, dark red and saffron hued,
That rise majestic from the shadowy depths.

And, walled in silence that is almost felt,
Each soul remote, detached, communes alone
With Him whose power this miracle has wrought.

The silence deepens and the shadows grow.

Then, in the woods that fringe the Canyon's edge,
Far off a solitary bird note sounds
And gently breaks the spell that held you mute.
And with a fleeting sigh the night breeze wakes
Sending a fluting murmur through the leaves
That rustle softly then sink back to rest,
And on the air there floats the faint perfume
Of desert roses blooming 'mid the rocks.

THE OLD CHURCH

Majestic there you stand—the storms you face—
Time makes you ever treasured day by day.
It must be that you glean some secret way
Down corridors of time, and beauty trace
Of great souls who have worshipped in the place,
And passing through the same great oaken door.
Your listening walls hear echoes ever more
That but enrich your never fading grace.

Such was the shining beauty of your life
When quiet music was a healing spring
For all the woes within that age of strife,
You gleaned some beauty found in every thing
As goodly folk passed daily up and down
In hurried movement through the little town.

Close by the street with lawn of tender grass
You stand with buried memories content.
A monument to those whose lives were spent
Within your sacred walls, where now—alas—
Few come to worship as the Sabbaths pass.
The rich toned bell is heard throughout the town
The tall spire wears the sunlight like a crown,
And lessons still are taught each lad and lass.

Within your walls remembering the care
Of builders who are sleeping very near,
Who thoughtful were of how the town might fare.
Yet, less regretful if they now should hear
Some name we speak or stories tell again
Of happiness when they were guiding men.

THE EARTH IS GOOD TO MAN

The earth is good to man.
It gives him daily bread,
And worthy paths to tread,
A sky above to scan,
And place to lay his head.

Man may not care for rose,
Or flower of the field,
May keep his vision sealed
To everything but woes,
Yet earth bestows its yield.

Man may be harsh, unkind,
Nor do the things he should,
And have the hardihood
To foster cruel mind,
Yet earth to man is good.

Earth moves on in its way
Amid sun, moon, and stars,
Though man may give it scars,
And tramp its sacred clay
With feet of greed and wars.

The earth is good to man,
But man ne'er finds his worth
And peace about his hearth,
Nor knows Creator's plan,
Till he is good to earth.

SPRING

Hail! thou messenger of Life,
That descends the golden stairway
Of the Sun,
To sow the seed of beauty
In the fertile womb of Earth.

Hail! thou messenger of Peace,
That descends the golden stairway
Of the Sun,
To sow the seed of Love
In the hungry hearts of men.

WEAKLING

Weak little man,
So strong
In the shade
Of your lifeless
God.
Pitiful sot
You are,
Who in
Degeneracy
Seek to find
A non-existent
Mirror
For your sin
And say,
'Look the
Sin is
His, not
Mine!'

WINGED HEART

Do not doubt I love you!
Do not doubt I love you . . .
But the open road is calling,
Calling night and day.

Mountain tops are waiting,
Snow-hushed
Patient, long.

Hushed the swaying tree-tops,
Waiting
For my song!

Do not doubt I love you.
Bid me
And I stay. . .

But O, the call of sunset,
The open road
And May!

In my heart the springtime
Is ringing like a bell.
Forgive . . . forgive a winged heart—
I love you and farewell!

SONNET

Fling wide the seed on darkling purple hill,
This promise April brings is surely all,
Or nothing now. Ask not of harvest, till
The seed renew itself with death in fall—
Has felt its rich strong blood's hot flow,
And bloomed with stars on musky scented night;
Has foamed like surf, and here below,
Received the blaze of cycle sharp and bright.

What if the seed should fall on stony soil;
Or frailing hail beat down the supple grain?
Now pregnant with a promised fruitful toil
Each grain shall feel the love of Easter rain—
Quite, here in dark warm earth, and all alone,
From friendly grave shall feel the lifted stone.

SNOW FALLS ON A MOUNTAIN RIVER

By this broken soft music
I warm me—
Peaceful ashes from skyward altars;
Music that stills the fear of hunted things
On the rim of white prairies.

White hazels over pools of water—
A woman's voice the river's murmur—
Smooth dark honey flowing—
Broken by cliffs' sheer abutments,
Broken and healed in pools where otters delve.

Whispers of whirring snowfalls,
Music for the hunted and broken,
Music I shall love when broken
And my altar fire ashes,
Falling over calm dark water.

SEA DREAM

Like a wave, to know no rest:
To break again, and fall again,
And rise again in swelling crest;
To meet again—a wave, and then
To sweep the sea, clasped breast to breast.

HO! HAIL! YOUNG BROTHER MOSCOW!

Gawking lad in seven-league boots—
Lad of raw-boned, crushing hands,
Arms of spring-steel,
Lover of red-kerchiefed peasant girls,
Awakened dreamer, builder of kaleidoscopes,
Somberly clad machinator of vivid ideas,
Schemer, dreamer, poet, and lover—
Young old man and old young man, too,
Soldier—and planner and builder—
Ho! Hail to you, young fellow!

A symphony in your soul
And a sword in your hand,
You have trampled the fields of your fathers;
Passionate hater of tin gods, amazer of nations,
Blasphemer, shouter of slang,
Builder of words and of worlds,
Sower, grower of countless seeds,
Open-mouthed, blue-eyed youth,
Ho! Hail! And—whither away?

CYPRESS

I know thy passion and I love thy schemes;
I've seen the ocean and its face of dreams;
Together, we live in a world that ends too soon;
Together, we stretch gaunt fingers to the moon.

THE HUMMING BIRD

With a whirr and a whirr, away he goes,
Drinking in sweets from each flower that grows,
Now he lights on a tree top, now on a rose,
Where the sweetest flowers are, he always knows.

Dear little fellow, with wings aglow
With all the colors that you can know;
Bill just made to extract the sweets
From each little flower that he meets.

What a whirr of beauty he leaves behind,
It thrills my body, my soul, my mind,
I will thank God in all my days,
For this little bird and his sweet ways.

A HYMN OF THANKSGIVING

O God of the sea and the mountains,
The hills and valleys and streams,
We thank Thee for days of beauty,
For nights of peaceful dreams.

For friends who are true and loyal,
For birds and sunshine and flowers,
For love that ever surrounds us,
Blue skies and plentiful showers.

For songs and laughter of children,
For youth evolved and free,
For music, singing and dancing,
Lord, we give thanks to Thee.

Thou givest us life abundant,
If we will only believe,
Open our hearts for this message,
Ask, Seek, Knock and Receive.

SNOW MESSENGERS

Frail crystal flakes of frozen down;
 Dream comeliness beyond compare;
Strange geometric fashionings,
 Like chastened thoughts afloat on air;
From far away where lakes are large,
 The greetings that you bring fall fair,
And though you spoil our flowered fields,
 Still offer beauties all as rare.

We take your salutation well,
 Fair lady of the northern snows;
But we would rather give to you
 A breath of our sweet southern rose.

DELUSION

Who plucks the apple from the wisdom-tree,
Invites a troubled end of wanted ease.
Only the stalwart brave should care to see
Life in its starkness and its fallacies.
A surcease lightens where the brain is blind,
And dreams efface the scars of penury,
While strange strabismus deviates the mind
And mothers hope with unreality.
Stay who can the hour of disenchantment;
Awakening is but a costly toy;
Delusion smiles in proud contentment,
Pure gold untainted by a crude alloy.
He who shall dare to know, must challenge life,
For wisdom beds and boards with constant strife.

INCOGNITO

I shall be the dancing shadows,
Dripping with silver moonlight,
That shall fashion sweet fancies
From the depths of night.
I shall be the flames in the hearth,
Before which perchance you linger,
To pay homage to an estranged dream. . .
Flames for remembrance . . . unknown singer.

I shall be the paths of memory,
Carrying you back to bygone places;
Unseen fibers that bind you tenderly
To other days and their graces.
I shall be the song, the unrest,
That ever dwells in your heart. . . .
A refrain you cannot call by name,
Yet of you a living part!

BEQUEATH

Love that has ripened, lived through many years,
Becomes sheltered in silent depths that words cannot
command;
There is little need to voice its triumph or heartbreaks,
All is told so unmistakably in the clasp of the hand.
Love that has known laughter and tears,
That has unfalteringly deepened with each duress,
Finds speech an incompetent envoy of heart's intent;
A world of devotion can be told by a single caress.
Tried love does not need the reassurance of words,
Its truest expression in silence lies;
What greater admission or denial can be told
Than that which is spoken by the eyes?
So, I send you my silences, great and small,
That they may convey what has been left unsaid;
In exchange, I have yours, which I know so well;
Old love speaks through the beauty of silent tread.

THOUGHTS ON A DYING PARETIC

Poor battered body, there you lie
As surely dead as when you die
So foul and horrible to see
You are revolting—even me.

Poor tortured brain, so gone, so wild
So fiercely wicked—then so mild
So demon-like in thoughts you hold
You frighten me—and I am old.

O God, I pray that when he dies
He will not look so, in Your eyes
For You know well the hell he bore
And surely that will right his score.

LEAVES IN INDIANA

When the leaves in Indiana
Start to turning red and brown,
We see nature's regal pattern
As a lovely velvet gown.
Oh those lingering lazy colors
And those vivid blazing reds,
Make that fascinating mixture
Go like wine, right to our heads.

When the leaves in Indiana
Start to turning red and brown,
It's a beauty without equal
And we know the Lord looks down.
For such beauty does not happen
It can't be a fad or whim,
It is planned to give us pleasure
And it comes to us from Him.

LOVE'S TRIBUTE

Out of the vast unknown you came to make my life
complete;

Since then the sky has seemed a brighter blue,
The singing of the birds, the scent of flowers sweet,
And all because of you, dear heart, of you!

The rosy streaks in dawn's sky bring thoughts of you;
The glare of noonday's sun and burning heat
Recall your warm, red lips and make me long for
evening's dew,
When I shall hold you in my arms, my sweet.

And there in the shelter of your close and dear embrace
I shall forget the past and coming years,
Remembering but the love-light shining on your face,—
The softness in your eyes akin to tears.

REGRET

We should have met and loved long years ago
When our two hearts were young and love a madness;
When blood like liquid fire raced through our veins—
When golden days waned into warm voluptuous nights
Leaving us spent like men drunk on old wine.

But in Life's autumn Fate decreed we meet and love—
That warm desire be born within our hearts;
While we, with groping hands, strive again to grasp
The glory of that dear dead youth that was and yet
is not

Quite ours, except as we may catch the dream and hold
It close against the all-absorbing years.

Love of maturity, so sweet, but like October's leaves,
You flame and burn, only to fade again and die forever.
And yet, know this: dearer you are than all my youth!
And this my one regret—so brief a time have we each
for the other

Before the dream must merge in Death's oblivion.

To E. M.

If I could make your proud heart ask befriending,
If I could make your spirit glad to kneel,
If I could make you stoop, and proud of bending
Your head above my own, in mute appeal;
If I could strip you once of all pretending,
Prove humbleness than pride love's stronger steel,
If I could make you unashamed of spending
Your ardor, break but once your heart's dread
seal—

Then could I let fair April quickly pass;
Greeting the summer, gladly welcoming
The frost of autumn's hand upon the grass,
The lonely cry of wild duck on the wing.
Never to dread again life's hour-glass—
Knowing the bleakest winter ever spring!

SORROW

Seal my lips, let no word pass
That gate;
Bind my heart, that no man see
That break.

Hide my eyes, their depths unplumbed
Remain,
That curious man see not
My pain.

I have not asked that I might pass unscathed,
Untouched by cruelest sense of loss,
That I of all the world should go unbids
To bear in loneliness my cross.

But for strength to hide my hurt
I pray;
That tongue loose not, nor eye
Betray!

DUSK

There was a soft hush
Upon the world tonight. . .
The beauty of the silent sun
Upon the waters. . .
The fading echo of sleep bird song
Upon the scented air. . .
It seemed as if God were there
And held His finger to His lips.

TO A FACTORY GIRL

What do you think of
The whole day long
Working away at your loom?
What's that you're humming—
A wistful song,
Or just a work-a-day tune?
Sometimes I fancy
(Watching your fingers
Long and fleeting and brown)
That a silken thread lingers
Before it winds slowly away
To a costly gown.

STARLIGHT

I did not know that I
Sent up my soul, last night
To hover there
Against a starless sky.
And yet, you died last night,
And I am sure there must
Have been one light
Shining there,
To guide you by.

TROPIC DAYEND

Now lengthen shadows of the dusk like ghost
Sprinkling thick dust upon bright painted maps
Receding sun has etched upon this coast.
Weirdly cloud-archipelago entraps
The burnished gold of west . . . with purple wraps
Horizon's east and darkens sapphire sound,
And slower tide of silver croons and laps
The dunes of sand topping this coral mound.
Lightly as fleece stillness and peace surround;
Winds drop in pines, their pinions, cool, release—
While silhouettes of wings gleam, homeward bound.
Outside the cove the rainbow paths increase,
Glinting three sails of sloops upon their way
To slip where spar-pricked harbor ends their day.

PRAIRIE SCHOONER

He raised no cry against his circumstance,
Well knowing he alone had no control,
And blamed no fellow man his lack of chance.

Religion proved no solace for his soul,
And he found cults led him from what was right
Where, bleak and dull, the prairie miles unroll.

He paused from life to let his soul delight
In forebear who, like flame lighting the dun,
Fought valiently for child . . . a widowed mite.
The trek of prairie schooner, once begun,
Recalled the one who 'mid the trackless way
Forged resolutely forward, rain or sun,
Not fearing death, whatever might betray,
And that became the creed he lived each day.

AUTUMN LAMENT

Why do I weep now that summer is gone
And the birds have southward flown,
Cool shadows gone from the bosky glade
The fields no longer in green arrayed
And the last of the asters blown?

The hills are a riot of red and gold
But the sad leaves whisper and sigh,
The wild geese all have northward flown,
The fir trees shake their limbs and moan,
For winter is hovering nigh.

Sweet summer would be eternal, Dear,
If I were there, or you were here!

PASSION

Night is come; and the dream again—
The olden dream of love's sweet rapture—
I seek to hold it. Lo! 'tis dawn,
A vision fleet, evading capture.
Thus ever and ever it lures us on
Up dizzy heights, down steep abysses,
And duty's call is lost anon
In the drowning roar of passion's kisses.

THE LOVE VIGIL

Softly the sun sinks to rest,
The hills are shrouded in gloom,
The moon as it glides o'er the mountain crest
Is silent and chaste as a tomb.
My garden so bright and fragrant
Is chill and shadowed with rue,
Covered close by the garments of night
And the flowers are drenched in dew.
It is there I await your coming
Though I know you never will,
And the sunbeams that disturb my dreams
Find me broken and still.

WHEN I HAVE CROSSED THE BAR

When I have gone to my home above,
And no one on earth shall see my face,
I wonder if those who loved me best,
Those who clasped me to their breasts;

When on some sad and silent day, I lie
With folded hands and lips that smile no more,
I wonder will some hearts grieve sincere,
And for my memory drop a tear, when I have crossed
the bar.

Will there be sadness in their hearts,
Because I have gone to meet my Saviour face to face,
Left a pleasant fireside where I loved to sit,
My home, my loved ones whom I loved to serve.

My home and loved here I leave behind
To meet the loved on the other side.
The flowers that bloom for me so fresh and fair—
Will these dear blossoms miss my tender care?

Perhaps my children, whose eager pattering feet
Have hastened my outstretched arm to greet
Will lay some flowers upon my silent heart,
When my chair is vacant by the fireside glow.
My many faults they will forget today,
Or, if remembered, some kind gentle friend,
Will say, "They were mistakes and not harshly meant
She tried to do her life work well, I know."

I LOVE A STORM

I love a storm, yes, I, who all my life
Have courted harmony, sought quietude;
Who cringe at every cruel word and rude;
Avoid unpleasantness; hate brawl and strife,
And all harsh scenes with noise and discord rife.
Yet awed, I unafraid, exultant stand
And view with ecstasy the storm-god's hand
That devastates and spoils with ruthless knife.
Some primal impulse answers to the storm;
My spirit welcomes in the threatening air
The conquering force it lacks but fain would share
In elemental strength, it sees the form
Of God, who glories in the conqueror's song
And bids faint hearts have courage and be strong.

MIRAGE

The early twilight of a dull, November day—
Rain, mist, a deepening fog.
Blurred bulks and ghostly trees loom phantom-like.
In the background, long, dejected, leafless vines
Droop on splotched and weather-beaten prison walls
But look, a shaft of light!
On the buttressed walls, a beautiful three-arched portal
appears,
Leading back, back into dim shadowy depths.
Almost we hear the strains of the evening chant
And glimpse the forms of kneeling worshippers.
We gaze in awe.

A long, low, drab roadster glides slowly through the
gloom
And silently disappears into the night;
The mysterious portal fades and vanishes.
Night, deep, dark, impenetrable settles relentlessly.
The prison walls show fainter, fainter;
Then merge into the all enveloping grayness.
But in my soul—cathedral doors swing wide.

ON THE THRESHOLD

"She is gone," they said. "She has lost life's breath.
She has passed to the desolate realm of death."

A whisper was wafted—or was it a sigh?
"I enter new life, for the soul cannot die."

"I go to the realm of love and of truth—
I go to the home of Immortal Youth."

HATE

To fall on thieves we need not go
The rambling route to Jericho.
They walk in city crowds today,
Pretend to help men while they prey.

The hardest thing that we can know
Is seeing saints to sinners grow.
When trusted friends are turned to foes
Earth has no solace for our woes.

LOVE

To meet the best we go not far.
Where love abides all blessings are.
Abiding with us, side by side
Are friends of old, the true and tried.

They bring us hope and faith anew;
Make roses bloom among the rue.
They are on earth the blessed sign
Of love and light and peace divine.

THERE IS A BEAUTY IN LATE SUMMER DAYS

There is a beauty in late summer days
After wild storms and burning suns are spent,
A tranquil beauty breathing of content
And strange new peace; a quiet song of praise
For golden light, for light that ceaseless plays
On hills and fields and gently-moving streams,
Turning the day's monotony to dreams
Of sheer delight; in Nature's happy ways
No hint obtains, no least disturbing fear
Of winds unleashed, of golden splendor fled
Into the realm of black, unfathomed mystery.
Such beauty, held so wonderfully dear
Will come again and things accounted dead
Once more proclaim their ancient destiny.

EARLY SUMMER

This is the hour
When miracles unfold in earth and skies—
The hour of vivid light and shade,
Of deepening blue and green and gold;
After the winter's blight,
Fierce, chilling winds,
The long, dark Night,
Morning is here—and Song—the crimson bird
Singing with glorious abandonment is heard.
All things are glad—the very stones in praise unite,
Hearing Creation's God proclaim
'Let there be Light'.

THE OAKS

I sat me down beneath the old oaks' shade,
And watched the brooklet shimmer 'neath the sun;
A thousand years, 'twas said, had passed them o'er
Since at their feet its silver sands had run.
I listened then to days when acorns fell
Amidst the silence of the forest wild,
Perchance were dropped in haste by squirrels small
When fleeing arrow of the Redman's child.
I saw the tiny shoots when first they came,
A promise then of naught more passing strange
Than all young dreams of life,—the years begun,
Begun,—a record of the centuries' change:
And half their life was spent in forest deep,
Their dreams unheard save by the mountains steep.

But hark! The solitude they called their own
Now echoes faint the footfalls of new deeds;
A people strange, and with them hopes unheard
Have come! . . . The quiv'ring forest bleeds—
'Tis gone! And down the centuries' wake
The old oaks still their silent vigil keep,
Unheard, unmoved, aloof in splendor tall,
The brooklet gliding on unto the deep.

I asked those oak-trees for their message true,
One thought from them that down my life should last,
The brooklet hushed its murmur,—“In Thy sight
A thousand years as yesterday . . . when passed!”
A thousand years—as hist'ry's leaves unroll,
A thousand years—strong courage to endure,
A thousand years—fierce gales and summer suns,
A thousand years—Eternity more sure!
And then the oak-trees with their grandeur piled
Looked on the brooklet's glory red, and smiled.

UNAWARE

You cannot know that your neglect
Withered my white faith in you
As cold wind chills a lily.
You, who walk your careless way,
Laughing and strong, in the warm sunshine,
How can *you* know that in the garden of my soul
A flower is dead?

THE SKYSCRAPER

You push your shoulders up against the sky,
But cannot reach the glistening stars of night,—
Reminding us of men who strive and climb,
And almost reach their gleaming goals,—not quite.

WALLS

All night, I beat my hands against the wall
That death had reared between us two, but failed
To hear your voice or see you smile; and all
Of you, I knew, was shut within the pale
Of that grim wall, so long and thick and high.
It is a weary, woeful thing to die.

But just today I passed a great stone wall
That kept for years a garden from my sight,
And found a loosened stone about to fall.
Then, through the aperture, I saw the light.
So much is done by time, which is so brief;
Shall long eternity not bring relief?

TO THE VIOLET

Ah, modest bloom—since now I've learned thou art
Of Life's organic plan, a kindred part;
I understand the sympathy that flows
From mental-light toward every bud that grows;
And thus 'tis more than fragrance, form, or hue
Which in this dell directs my step to you.
Full charming is thy smile, sweet Violet.
And oh I prize you so, Fair Queen, and yet
We soon must part—though memory's fond hour
Within my heart crowns you a fadeless flower.

THE NUPTIAL HOUR

As now the law has set its kindly seal
Upon the vow I've made to God and thee;
And since thine eyes—twin gems of Beauty's crown—
Have flashed the light for which man strives to live;
And lips grown fond accepting marriage rights,
That placed thy life and virtue at my feet,
I name this hour a sacred, holy date
To which for time my conscious life shall cling;
And thereby prove that treasures of the heart
Can twine two souls and make them truly one!

HOPE

Oh, fadeless hour—that morn we met—
It mocks my heart, and yet, and yet
I seem to prize that hour the most
Which gives the pain of which I boast.

Some day, mayhap, my star will shine
And lead him home as mine—as mine
To smile again as long ago
And kill the pain and drown the woe!

THE EXILE

Though puritan born of a straight laced breed
Where duty was law and worship a creed;
In a small brown house with a clean scrubbed floor
And a tall white lilac guarding the door,
He lives in a land of passion and hate,
Of doing one's will and trusting to fate;
In a goat hair tent with a hot sand floor
And a cocoanut palm stands guard at the door.

SIC TRANSIT

This moment is mine—
This infinitesimal fragment of time,
This most irrepressible purposeful Now.
This pinpoint between all the eons that were
And the nebulous years yet to be;
A favor that's snatched from the lap of the gods
And means—nothing whatever to me.

SUNRISE

Sunrise
And a new day dawning!
A thrill of warmth
Runs through the sod,
Earth trembles into flower
For the sunlight
And God.

Sunrise
And a new day dawning!
Faith thrills humanity's clod
And he blossoms into love,
Because of
His God.

THE ANSWER

And the moon only half looked at me.
And the waters whispered softly, lapping, lapping.
But I could not hear.
And the moonlight's path on the ebony waters
Broke into silver hieroglyphics
To tell me of Thee.
And I looked above at the star-sky
And beyond to the east where clouds lie
And I could only pray,
Let me but go your way.

POPLAR TREE

Round tower of the night
I see
Your silent sentry
Looking down
At me.

FUTILITY

Like a spring torrent, you came
And filled the waiting heart of mine
With your wild, wild love
That killed like all wild things.

Like the perfect song of a hidden bird, you came
But we could not know my heart would close
With your secret, secret love
That chilled like all cold things.

Like a warm wind that dries rain
After winter's pain, you came
With your gentle, gentle love
That grew like all good things.

HOPE

Hope that is magic,
Healing the bruised
And oft-broken thought,
Giving back to the storm-swept human,
Peace that no money
Ever has bought.

Crying aloud
To a body that's broken,
Urging it on, ever on.
For a life that has found
In the peace of a morning,
Hope renewed, can go on.

For him who can see
The glory of the sunset,
The blue of the sky,
The gold of the sun,
There'll be no returning
To thoughts that are burning,
But always the urge
To go on.

HURT

And there are times, in the run of life,
When the days are born of pain;
When the friendships one has harbored,
Are valueless, empty, and vain;
When the soul stands barred in loneliness,
As the derelict stranded at sea;
When the house thou hast carefully builded,
Has shifted, and fallen on thee.

PASSION

Colorful as a crimson heart,
Yet crushed to a shattered hope
In a storm of ruthless haste departs:
Swept over a canyon of desires
Into a heaven of paradise true:
Through drifting clouds
Out over vast stretches blue:

Caught in a gust of wind
And hurled headlong through space:
Down, down to what's below;
Still with hopes to win the race,
But with a dash of life
In a race for wealth it led.
We find the cavern shed
Where the meteor fled.

ASHES OF MEMORY

How fond is the memory
Of great and noble deeds done:
As they live on through ages
Such as these souls have won.

Each one a part to fill
In life's great world of drama:
Pain, hate, sorrow, and joy,
Shuffled together from around the corner.

With the ashes of memory
A living soul is born,
Which brings vividly to mind
The robes of accomplishment worn.

PICTURES

From my hilltop,
The lake lies far below,
Royal blue.
The rosy hills
Hold it lovingly,
As I have seen
Cupped in your hands
Spring's first violets.

REMINISCENCE

The perfume of a sun-drenched field,
The pine-grove's aromatic scent,
With memories of days of youth
How strongly and how sweetly blent!

Tho field and forest disappear
As golden years go fleetly by,
These recollections shall I hold
Warm in my breast, till I may die.

ALONE

The awesome sweetness of the end of day
Descends o'er ocean, as the gentle hand
Of God. The last faint gold that tints the wave,
The aura of benign Divinity,
Permeates all my being, and I feel
Close to the Unknown. Ne'er alone am I;
Eternal beauties here keep faithful tryst.

MOUNT PISGAH

What other mountain peak, than Pisgah's site
Gives from associations, though forlorn,
So cheery promises; though Moses worn,
Like Aaron, was denied the great delight,
To enter Canaan. Views did God bedight
With beauty, from the peak. Of glory shorn;
His grave unknown, when those below did mourn;
He passed to highest rapture, from the height.

For just one sin, with humbleness forborn,
He climbed to top alone, his heart-strings torn,
The object of his trials, now in sight,
To die: in majesty, his soul took flight.
He, with Elijah was with Jesus seen,
In the Transfiguration of bright sheen.

ISLES OF SHOALS

Composed of mass of tumbled granite strong,
The largest of the group is Appledore,
While Star's inhabitants are numbered more
And is the star resort in summer long;
While others to the Isles of Shoals belong.
The steamer counts in whistles, guests for shore
In tens, and after dinner they explore
And wish their pleasure trip they might prolong.
Here, buried treasure is supposed to be.
A hiding place of Captain Kidd. A Cave
Called Betty's; tragic lore a plenty, we
Were told. From seat, Miss Underhill, by wave
Was rudely swept, with book she read, while she
Unconscious was of rising tide, and watery grave.

THE SONG OF THE WEAVER

All day I weave my silvering dreams,
Whilst the corded shuttle flies;
Fast and straight through the loom;
And the linsey-woolsey cord that binds
My colored rags soon fashions
Quaint patterns and designs within the rug.
Ever and ever, to and fro,
The shuttle spins in ceaseless haste;
Whilst dreams are built upon its course,
And fancy weaves a joyous song,
As fair and bright as are the tunes,
My fingers play upon the rattling beam.
Full many a year I've plied my trade,
And gnarled hands and fingers bent,
Proclaim me master of the loom,
That weaves the rugs of olden days.
Bent is my form, and dulled my eye,
Yet, sings my soul its song of joy;
"I am the Weaver of the Rug"
And dreamer, too, of songs unsung.
Songs unsung, like luscious pearls,
Drop from my lips as though in prayer;
Endless threads of vari-colored weaves,
That bind me to my weaver's chair.
Endless ribbons, too, that span the Time
'Twixt Life and Death, a Master span,
That weaves me tight into the rug,
Spread forth upon the floor,
Of God's vast domicile.

THE END

When angel trumpets sound the world's last sun
With such superb alarum, and the flash
Of clanging cymbals dazzles as they clash,
And come to call me, since my sands have run;
I pray that they may find me not among
Such sentries on the walls where light's waves wash,
Nor hither or yon where shining angels dash,
But in some book of sonnets, when day's done:
There in eternal twilight, may they read
Encountering my immortal parts, so bright,
For any such I have from earth's clay freed;
Divested of its faulty feeble seed
Dwelling as some slight good, like endless light
In souls of others, that's all the end I need.

LABORARE EST ORARE

One day I chanced to find myself among
A busy, bustling, surging city crowd;
The rich, the poor, the humble, and the proud,
A never ceasing, eager, anxious throng.
And as they hurried, hustling me along,
All with the same activity endowed,
I wondered what they sought with clamor loud
And questioned: Could it be they toiled for wrong?
But as the evening came, I often passed
A happy home where little children played,
And where I learned why all this toil began.
Then having reached my humble home at last,
I laid me down to rest and softly prayed,
"Thank heaven today I toiled with brother man."

KANSAS PETE

Sometimes I sit in the old arm chair,
My Parker and coat and shells are there;
All but the setter I held so dear,
And he's been gone full many a year.
Black was his coat, but his heart was white,
Why did he leave me—it doesn't seem right!
At twelve we're young and dogs are old—
Three score and ten ere our tale is told.

Sometimes I dream that once again
I'll follow him on through stubble and fen,
And perhaps in that Happy Hunting Ground,
Where quail and partridge must abound,
Old Pete has found a bird or two,
And is holding a point as he used to do,
Waiting to hear my well-known feet—
“Hold steady, old fellow! I'm a-comin' Pete.”

ENGLISH IVY

A trellis of English ivy
In my window stands
Basking in the sunshine,
Trained by my own hands
The leaves lift gaily upward
Their shining morning faces,
With tendrils clinging snugly,
All in their proper places.

Thus, womanlike, it wanders,
Where it listeth ever,
Yielding to tender guidance,
But roughness, never, never;
And thou, so like the ivy,
Your tendrils, woman's art,
Have woven a flaxen girdle,
Around my very heart.

PASTEL—MARCH

Beyond my lattice lies a land impearled,
No single gem of emerald Spring inlays,
Though all the harsh, bright pride of Winter's world
Is spent, and we are waiting vernal days.

Within, we hold a secret of the Spring,
A captured fragrance on its road to May,—
Rose blooms of hyacinth that gaily fling
Their colours on the window's background gray.

Lo! you are here before my happy eyes,
In mood to match the sweet transition hours:
The silver paleness in your gown's surprise,
Your ribbon's whim a hint of lilac flowers.

THE RIDE

Daylong the brightness of the fields,
The blueness of the skies,
Were but the bounty of your smile,
The beauty of your eyes.

Until at night, a lamp-lit house,
Along a roadway scanned
By one, far-journeyed, was, at last,
The comfort of your hand.

RETURN

Oh, miracle that brought her back!
Persephone the ancients knew,—
What Winters might they not endure
Who waited Spring and you!

Remembrance, now, alone may bring
Persephone to warmth of sun,
Love only glimpse her on the hill,
But all her seasons, one.

AMINA

Aloewood and ambergris
Burn Amina's tapers;
Past gold arras to Astarte
Rise erotic vapors.

Aloewood and ambergris
Leave her cold and stately—
Amina should see your eyes
As I've seen them lately.

JANUARY MOON

Dusk lies lilac on the snow
Deepening to indigo;
Famished sparrows, puffed and chill
Seek a clement window-sill.

Since her rising, slim and cold
As the white hands of Isolde,
Who dares ask a mortal boon
Of the January moon!

SOMEWHERE

White cherry blossoms falling in the night,
The snow-cold moon, the ragged dew-wet grass,
All portents, suddenly, to pain-sharp sight
That will not let the smallest detail pass.
Not once again through earth's glad panoply
Of swelling life to sense its pulsing thrill,
But evermore to look on spring and see
A gray nun standing on a barren hill.

To listen through an apathy of pain
For some remembered word that nevermore
Will bring back beauty where your lips have lain. . .
A voice shrilled by the widely open door—
"I told her, but she didn't seem to care;
She stared and went out suddenly—somewhere."

OUR GARDEN

Our minds are our gardens,
To do with as we please.
Will they be filled with roses fair,
Or will it be weeds that we'll plant there?

Our thoughts we'll use as seed,
A rose will spring from some kind deed.
A seed of malice will surely bring,
A thistle there, an ugly thing.

A stately lily, with it's head hung low,
Would it bloom from a thought of hatred?—no.
Or do you like poppies of a crimson hue?
Then watch closely your seeds—I answer you.

The gardens we pass along our way,
We always notice from day to day.
The one which is kept, oh, so neat,
Never ceases to give us a thrilling treat.

But have you noticed how we become,
When we see a garden which is slovenly done?
“The man is lazy,” we exclaim,
Of course, we're right—the result is plain.

What of our minds to the passer-by?
It will well behoove us, you and I,
To pick with care these thoughts, our seeds,
And always be watchful to keep out the weeds.

O, WOULD THAT WE COULD E'ER RECALL

O, would that we could e'er recall
That crosses are but as shadows that fall
Along life's transcendent way.

And would that we could e'er recall
That sorrows are but as clouds, after all
Soon passing with the fleeting day.

Then would that we could ever know
That all Life's ills and cries of woe
Fade and disappear as melting flakes of snow,
Propelled by a force that destines them to go
When Love is given sway.

LOVE

Winds blow,
Storms rage,
Fate strikes
With its countless twists.
It may be stunned,
Hindered, wounded,
Oft to mortal concept—
Destroyed.
Yet, Love goes on,
Lives, remains—
Raises its bruised head,
Struggles,
Now undaunted,
Until it *conquers*,
For—
It cannot die;
It is *eternal*.

CAVELL AND DAWN

Nursing was her avowed profession,
Yet they said she made digressions
Violating certain laws of war;
Helped prisoners escape by a secret door.
Was it her head or her heart that led?
Deny it she did not, was proud instead!
She did as her conscience told her;
They did as their laws told them.
To those she served a heroine;
To the others a traitress from within.
'Tis best to stick to a noble trade,
Patriotic transgressions be left unmade.
So she was shot at break of dawn,
Like Mata Hari, Early Dawn.
Her life misspent, a soul forlorn!

MATA HARI, EARLY DAWN

Mata Hari, Eye of Dawn,
Eurasian dancer, graceful brawn;
Went to France
And by her gestures and her glances
Captured many in her dances.
Said not to have lived of virtue;
Her profession had no church-hue,
For her heaven did not yawn,
Though her name meant Early Dawn.
Had she stuck to her profession,
Might yet head her great procession;
But they said she learned the secret
Of an officer quite indiscreet.
So she died by firing-squad
Like an ordinary soldier-clod.
Did she work for common gold;
Or fanatic was quite bold?
As a spy shot 'fore the dawn,
Mata Hari now is gone,
Life misspent, a soul forlorn!

POETS

Dreams are theirs and hunger—cold;
Aspirations, love untold.
Music throbbing softly sweet
In each heart's tempestuous beat.
Calm and storm, the keenest pain;
Sunshine, clouds, and April rain.
Peace is theirs—and sorrow, too.
Morning light and hope anew.
Toil is theirs—and recompense—
In dreams fulfilled—
And joy intense.

SMILES

Smiles, like wayside flowers,
Shedding a fragrance rare,
Are beauty spots that border
The roads of everywhere.
When dark gave way to light—
And God proclaimed it morn,
The sun in robes of saffron
Smiled and made the dawn.
Each trembling flower blushed—
With many coquettish wiles;
The sunbeams kissed the roses—
And the world was full of smiles.

FLOWERS OMITTED

A funeral today—
And the heart of me draped in black,
To hold the last sad rites
For dreams that will never come back.
Dead! the dreams I had cherished
Through all the bitter years.
Better that I had perished
Than stood at their grave in tears.

TO MY FATHER'S VIOLIN

Of all the things he knew but never voiced
You sang for him. With you alone he shared
His secret thoughts. You knew the joy that flared
At the first flower of cotton, you rejoiced
With him for each hope looking to tomorrow.
For one attuned your slender form could fashion
A mirror for each mood, the sweep of passion,
The low, sweet, purple symphony of sorrow.

Perhaps if I might dare to take you now,
Your bow-strings still a-quiver with your grief,
You might consent to teach me from the brief
But ageless lore, dwelling alone in you,
Of one who had no sceptre save a plow,
His field a kingdom, yet who knew . . . who knew.

SILHOUETTE

Skyward
Cypress trees turn
From tangled mangrove marsh,
Where every knotted root shelters
Struggle.

Silence,
Save one frail leaf
Scraping over the grass,
And every startled form gazing
Tensely
Poolward,
Where dull orbs stare
Into red saurian eyes.
One crimson cry, pressed out . . . again
Silence.

BELLS

Circumstances buried me in that deep
Of a great city where no church bells blare:
Necessity (or was it urge of heart?)
Forced a return to discordant clamor,
With absence and lack of finality,
And yet the clash, to me, was music sweet;
Hungriily I quaffed the peal—lived again.

AWAY FROM THE TOWN

Give me a castle on a high hill,
Where I may go when the wind is still,
Where the sun strikes full from a cloudless sky,
Where the bald eagle nests because it's high.

Where I may see far the land below,
Bosoming a river's gentle flow
To a white cascade aglow with light,
A plunging, plashing, sparkling delight.

Where I may look down on the flight of birds,
And yet deeper down on the pastured herds,
And the growing corn, and the verdant fields,
And feel God's nearness in a heart that yields.

ON RUSSIA'S PURE NEGATION

Art thou but brawn, inured to the dawn
Of a decadent civilization?
This fault abjure! spurn to inure
To that begat of aberration.

'Tis false philosophy doth shape
Interpretation
First to rape,
And then to mock, benign creation.

THE WINDS OF SPRING

Don't you hear the impulsive song they sing?
Don't you hear the warm winds whispering low
As gently o'er the wooded hills they blow
In the glorious moonlit nights of spring?
Isn't your heart warmed by the winds of spring
As they come strumming a tune soft and low,
So filled with the mystery of life they know,
Isn't your soul touched by the glad songs they sing?
Don't you feel the thrill of the winds of spring
That call to the flower beneath the snow
Again to awaken to life's pulsing flow—
A beautiful, fragrant, and lovely thing?
Doesn't your heart beat glad to the winds of spring
And the message of life they always bring?

ROSES OF YESTERDAY

Red roses came like crimson tides
Faded, and now are torn apart;
Roses in which rare beauty abides—
Heralded emblems of a loving heart.
Sweet white roses that have extolled
The fair purity of the bride,
Are now returned to earthly mold;
Lived their swift fragrant life and died.
Sweet roses of enchanting June,
Smiling with the dawn's early kiss,
Smiling when dusk and golden moon
Made this a shadowland of bliss.
Still the birds sing and breezes strum
For us a low sweet melody,
A theme of moonlit nights to come
Filled with summer's serenity.

TAEDIUM VITAE

These are sad murmurings
Of shadows
 melting into my soul;
Whispering—
 not of love,
 of tangled shreds of music
 or of beauty,
But of death!

This would I have—
Dark monster
 called bringer of peace!
Only this,
For which I stretch my arms,
 yearning to caress.
Come and soothe my brow
And whisper thy litanies
 softly and quietly,
 forever.

ASSURANCE

Some day,
Under the eagle's wing
I shall find a treasure.

Under the eagle's wing,
Deep in the sunlit bay,
In remembered pleasure,

Some day,
I shall find a treasure.

IN THE GARDEN

Cooling gray showers
On pulsing flowers,
Gleaming dewy rays
Singing sunny lays.
Golden blossoms gay
Turning heads away.
Grasses tall and green
Growing stars unseen.
Insects, birds, 'mid trees
Busy, buzzing bees,
Drawing honey here
Flying far and near.
Twilight comes with sleep
Birds and blossoms peep
Through the peaceful haze,
Shining flies in maze
Break the darkness deep
Faithful vigil keep.

AT THE BAY

Fishes white and fishes gray
 Skipping through the balmy air
Splash amid the waters blue,
 Meeting driftwood on their way.
Coming boldly from afar
 Sooty boatlets sail along
Towing barges in their wake
 Bags and barrels full of tar.

Sea-gulls flying to and fro
 Wings a-flutter black and white
Youngsters wading 'mong the rocks
 Seeking treasures, whistling low.
Purplish sky and orange sun
 Breezes blowing far and wide
Break the quiet of the day,
 Foamy wavelets wildly run.

THE WRITTEN MESSAGE

If I should go with you into the night
With a candle burning
I could not show you the way;
For I have lost my sight.

If I should sing you a song
You would not be thrilled;
For the beauty of my voice was spilled
When I dropped the chalice
Of the light.

If you should behold my life again
You might be conscious
Of a guarded breath;
For the menopause of the light
Is the dark of a conscious death.

REPETITION

A maniple of dust
Of common clay
Thrown into the air
And feathers of a rara avis
To be whisked down by the wind
To be reclaimed by the earth—
Is the story of life retold.

THE CONSUMMATION

The mortal life of me is very great:
The earth and all the hosts of heaven
Have entered it with beauty and with fate
And time has blessed it with its leaven.
But, when I gaze upon infinity,
The vastness of the mood of sages,
I feel that life will not have fashioned me,
Till I am numbered with the ages.

LOVE

Love is such a virile thing
Though so very shy,
Stays behind and flourishes,
When it's free to fly.

Love is just a wilding bird,
Never will it be tame;
Catch it, cage it, feed it—
Never is it the same.

Love is such a fragile thing
It is sure to die
If you grasp or strive to hold it—
Better let it fly.

STORM

I wake. The sighing night wind sweeps
Through pines that line the darkened steeps;
The moon sails on across the stars,
But my soul pants within its bars.

Where are my glorious dreams of youth,
My passionate yearning after truth?
All buried 'neath the trifles of life,
And lost, lost in a futile strife!

The moon, the stars, melt into dark,
The wild wind moans through pine trees stark;
With thunder of the sea waves leap,
Conscience has called my Soul from sleep.

Merciless, it probes my Soul tonight.
Before that bar, my Soul must answer right.
Twisted and tossed, my body of clay
With my anguished Soul writhes till break of day.

THE CAPTIVE CANARY

Beautiful bird, how can you so sweetly sing
Deprived of your rightful freedom of the wing?
How can you in such melodious songs engage
Locked within the limits of your little cage?

Perhaps you sing to cheer your blighted life,
Your dulcet tones may soothe your inward strife
While within these cruel bars you are confined
And make your heart more easily resigned.

Perhaps you sing to please the saddened heart
Of those poor souls whose joys are far apart;
The sweetness of your ever charming voice
Can make the saddest of sad hearts rejoice.

You do not languish, nor repine, nor mope,
Though of freedom you may have lost all hope,
And no sign have you shown of dull despair
Though your bondage may seem to you unfair.

Prison bars do not a prison make
When such as you can freely undertake
To lift your spirit up to realms on high
And thus your rude captivity defy.

Like you in your too restricted round
Man also by circumstance is bound,
Held firmly captive in its embrace
Quite like you in your unwanted place.

And, like you, man oft for freedom longs—
To fly away from vexatious wrongs,
Away from every ill and care
To other spheres more free and fair.

But, like you, man may his woe suppress
With fresh hope and joy and cheerfulness,
And sing through life in calm content
Though captured by environment.

AUTUMN

There's a gleam of rippling silver
On the surface of the stream,
And the countryside is drowsing
As if rapt in some fair dream;
While the earth is bathed in sunlight,
Of a mellow golden cast,
That reflects the wealth and splendor
Of a summer that is past.

Hills and woods are like a canvas,
Where an unseen Artist's hand
Adds the glorious tints of Autumn
To a sylvan wonderland;
For the maples' gold and russet,
And the oaks' deep bronze and red,
Blend their richness with the azure
In the great vault overhead.

Then the whispering breezes frolic
In the twilight's deepening shade,
As they join the evening chorus
In an Autumn serenade
To the harvest moon that's smiling
With a pale enchanting light,
While fantastic forms are dancing
To the music of the night.

In the splendor that surrounds us
On an Indian Summer day,
Are the tokens of the goodness
That attends our earthly way;
For the gracious Queen of Autumn
Walks in beauty, undefiled,
As she spreads the earth with bounties—
Gifts from Nature to her child.

MID-CHANNEL

I have attained serenity;
 (Monsters lie on the floor of a smooth, green sea)
My hands have found repose—
 (Pulses are leaping still that would be free)
I, who followed the mad, mad gods,
 (Oh, music of Pan that throbs unceasingly)
I, who loved the rose.

CHRYSANTHEMUMS

Little yellow chrysanthemums, you hold
All of a vanished summer's hoarded gold
And now you spend it in the frosty air;
Lavish you are, reckless, devil-may-care.

Lusty and spicy! You know how to give,
How meet the wind and ice and gaily live!
The others died or begged that they be housed;
Laughing, you took November and caroused.

UNTAMED

He's leashed and trained;
He goes through his paces;
He bows politely,
Correctly grimaces.

Under his glove
Are talons gleaming,
Under his eyelids
a jungle dreaming.

THE GOLDEN WEDDING

Hark! the sound of golden bells—
 Faint and sweet their music wells—
Through the ghostly ages swelling
 As their tale of love they're telling.
Love that's lasted fifty years,
 Pulsed and thrilled through smiles and tears.

Through the mists of creeping time
 Called to life by that golden chime,
See the bride in virgin white,
 Her earnest face with love alight
Turned on her groom that happy night.
 All their future seemed so bright.

They were happy and so young,
 Their lives as yet a song unsung.
That brilliant, festive wedding night
 Was graced by many faces bright—
Long since buried from our sight.
 As time has sped on its ceaseless flight.

Now as evening shadows fall,
 Long years together they recall.
Their wedded hands each other seek,
 Their hearts hold more than they can speak.
Together on life's stony road
 They've helped each other bear the load.

And now 'tis fifty years ago,
 The bitter and the sweet they know.
That bride and groom of long ago
 Knew not the deep and sacred flow
Of love that's grown through bitter tears,
 The married love of fifty years.

BODY-AUTUMN

If only I might reach out to your hand, and find
The same responsive prickling as you give me from
your mind.

Are you really so absorbed in each eager thought of
ours,

That you do not feel a kindred body's sympathy?

O, passion's courage, press my love into her side, be-
fore the hours

Reconcile my longing with her indifference to me.

SKY-BRIDGE

A cap of fog
Lies on the night,
Dimming lights, hushing sounds,
But bringing a clairvoyance
That sets your face
Shining through the mist,
And separates your thoughts
Like the beads of water
That gather on my window pane,
So that I may see and understand them
And return them to you,
Warmed by my heart,
On the morning sun.

SILENCE

You made such a little noise
As you went away,
That I couldn't bear to cry
And pierce the silence.

You were so calm—
Only the hollow of your throat
Was sunk between taut muscles.

TEACHERS

What profits crown your labor unceasing,
What lasting glory lights your humble lot?
What if the most of us still unknowing
Bedim your worth, defiantly care not
What destiny your plodding feet may reach?
The joy of service rendered in sheer love
Of all that's noble, virtuous, and great;
The creed unshakeable that stirs to move
Your soul to intense love for soul; the fate
Of growing minds left with you to teach,—
These give kindlier answers that minds sedate
Care more the love of wisdom's lore to preach.
O Teacher, will not the birth of a genius' brain
Under your touch pay you for all your pain?

TO A GIRL WITH SWEET SMILES

Little shafts of sunshine
On a dreary winter day
Drive out my gloomy thoughts
And make my sad heart gay.

The sweetness of your smiles
My gloomy mood disarms;
I find my soul and heart
Poor captives to your charms.

WITCH-DOCTOR

There is evil in the fire-light,
Its gleam is savage and bright.
There is evil in the shadows gray,
The evil of a cunning brain.
There is evil in the deadly eyes,
The evil glitter of a snake
Attracting by its magic orbs
The prey thus rendered helpless.
The muttered words enchant—
The outflung hand compels—
In Africa he reigns supreme,
Secure in mystic knowledge.
A mighty warrior: the witch doctor.

SUNSET HOUR

There is crashing in the underbrush
The forest life is waking,
It is stirring as the sun sinks low.
Down to water—single file—
Dusky elephants are coming,
First the bulls and then the young
Into the muddy water-hole.
Flaming gulls and sacred ibis
Westward to the sinking sun
Fly into the dying day.
The king of beasts is waking
You can hear his sleepy voice
Growing stronger with the pangs of hunger,
Growing in the knowledge of his strength.
There is evil air prevailing
As the day gives place to night.
Can't you feel the hidden meaning,
Vague uneasiness returning,
As the moon begins to glimmer
At the fading of the day.

FETISH

Of carven jade an elephant
Flings up his trunk, defiant, proud,
Majestic and symbolical
Of pleasant portents—true love vowed.

Maha-pudma supports the world
Of heart's desires—a vigilance
That warns adhesion to the sign
Of purity (and temperance).
But Chukwa—tortoise that upholds
The Maha-pudma—beckons down
The towering trunk which, lowered, stays,
Reversing thus the portent found
In Kama's lore. Dejected is
The omen that once buoyed dreams.

This symbol thus is given him
Who plants his scroll beneath the beams
Of Mammon's treacherous, mystic moon.
He goes to that Green Bird that told
Fairstar was daughter of the king
For with its wisdom questions hold
No mystery—the Bird knows all.
But, fronted with a burning dart
It bows its head, there falls a pall,
And woman's constancy remains
Hid—cloaked in royal purple rags
Through which hypocrisy is shown.

But hid is Cestus (worn by hags)
And he who wrote a wavering scroll
Stalks up and parts the purple gloss
Which covers infidelity
And all of Eden's glittering dross:
Symbolical—femininity.

THE ANGELUS

I. MORNING

In the eastern sky, rosy dawn
Proclaims to us a new day born.
Soon on the clear sweet morning air
The Angelus will call to prayer.
A moment's pause, new strength to gain
To meet the day's joy, work or pain,
And fill the heart with sweetest poise,
Calm and serene amid the world's noise.

II. NOON

Once more the sweet chimes are ringing;
Once more quiet and peace bringing,
As we pause in the day's hard toil
Turning our backs on its turmoil.
Just a moment out of its strife;
A moment's prayer, and again life
Seems new, sweet, meanings to assume
As our tasks we once more resume.

III. NIGHT

Gently the dusky night veil falls.
Once again the Angelus calls
Softly, all work to lay aside
And in our homes safely abide.
Then sinking in sweet, dreamless sleep
Safe our Maker our souls will keep,
With all strife, trouble and sorrow
Forgotten until the morrow.

TEA TIME

Will there be tea things in Heaven
And a corner, quaint and cozy—
With the gold glare of harps and streets
Turned, at twilight, softly rosy?

My hands might not be so lonely—
Might not miss your hands so much,
If they had fragile cups to fill with tea
And old silver things to touch.

This, I think, perhaps would leaven
Grief of Death, make it less grim—
If I could sit at five o'clock,
Talking friendly-like with Him.

SONNET TO KANSAS

Comrades in spirit with the pioneers,
Each generation of our Kansas youths
Captains a Ship of State that never veers
Its forward course of fundamental truths.

Where Quantrill sacked a town, a College, here,
Proclaims Youth's progress from Mt. Oread;
While halls of Art and museums hold dear
The simple beauty their ancestors had.

Where prairie schooners lumbered on the trail,
Now cities shoot steel towers to the sky;
And man-made birds wing passengers and mail
More swiftly than the fiercest eagles fly.

Yet still symbolic of the State we prize,
The sturdy Sunflowers, unattended, rise.

MYSTIC

Often I have seen him sit
Crossed and bowed with Holy Writ
Opened wide upon his knee
He could neither feel or see;
Lost within another self,
High, suspended on a shelf
'Twixt two worlds, this one and that;
Watching him there as he sat
One would never think or see
He was in Infinity.

UNDER THE SPELL

Under the spell of a few magic strings
Muted down to snare my soul
I can forget the taunting things
I can perceive the burden roll.
I can go on facing the goal
I can bear up under the stings
I can believe—I can lose fear
I too—Great God—can persevere!

ROSARY

I went to buy a loaf of bread
And found her there with bowed head
Telling her beads.
Her bony fingers moved along
Caressingly and lingered long
Upon the worn and shiny bits
While ever from her muttering lips
Her soul rushed in relief.
And all the while she counted change
Her fingers rested on those chains.
And when I paid the stated cost
I saw them slip on to the cross.
Ah surely nothing seems a wraith
To such a soul with such a faith!

THE TENANTS

In winter now, I feel warm steam
Come through the pipes in early morn.
For breakfast a green melon ripe
Is served on amber, in my room.

When on an errand to a shop
I need not trudge, but ride en route,
And to a play, where my eyes weep,
I'm ushered to the finest seat.

But O, all this bewilders me,
For I have shivered in the dark,
For I have seen stark pantry bare
Stare in my face—grim sepulchre.

If I shall live one hundred years,
I never can be warm or fed:
Once Chill and Hunger stalked without,
Now they have moved within my heart.

SHADOWTIDE

Yellow dawn, world wide and pure,
Trusting heart with faith as sure—
Scene serene—love smiles, secure.

O, rustling wind and distant dart,
Come lightening stroke—O dying heart
Tell not the Soul the dawn is dark!

DO YOUR DUTY

Your duty do whate'er befall,
Whate'er may be reward;
To God you should be giving all,
As all belongs to Lord;
He's purchased us with heavy price,
By shedding precious blood;
He'll give you heaven, all that's nice,
With joy your soul will flood.

Your duty do whate'er may come,
Rewards be great or small;
Our debt to Lord is heavy sum,
We ne'er could pay it all;
But Jesus hath the debt all paid,
To pay there's nought to do;
To Christ, should always give our aid,
What duty comes to you.

Your duty do, 'tis all He'll ask,
For what He's done for you;
Your duty ne'er is heavy task,
He helps you duty do;
He's always with you to the end,
He never will forsake;
To purpose everything can bend,
He e'er will undertake.

WHEN I DIE

I, being young,
Find death no problem yet,
But were I old,
Respectable with fame,
I fancy then 'twould be the same;

For when I die just bury me,
And bury me not deep
But shallowly
Where sun can warm my loneliness.

Nor bother with a tombstone cool,
Conventionally rhymed,
But rather let a tree stand there
With questing roots to hug me close
And suck me up its height each spring
To see man's newest wonder wing.

If weeds abound upon this mound
Wherein I lie,
Just let them flourish, go to seed
And spring up fresh in season;
Because my final bed
Must be in Nature's setting, free
From stinting cemetery,
Aside a clamorous road
Whereon life surges swift and changing by.

And when the knoll is leveled off,
Is choked tumultuously with growth,
The tree is fallen rot—
Then know I lie, what's left of me,
You know not where,
Content if but a word, a phrase,
A thought still lingers echoing.

OFF CANTERBURY ROAD

Off Canterbury Road we found a lane,—
Crooked, steep, and with birches all the way.
Or ferns and junipers; close to earth they
Heard the patter of merry truant rain.
The trees sang "WELCOME" in their glad refrain.
A brook joined in to make dull moments gay,
For not one cloud was golden; all were gray;
Yet our glad hearts were free from every chain.

With arms encircled 'round each other's waist
We climbed the hill, and birds sang jestly wise.
They knew that we had found our Paradise
And here we wished to stay; not flee in haste
From this new-found sweetness,—our first taste
Of primeval beauty 'neath clouded skies.
Our hearts swelled with rapture and happy eyes
Closed out the entire world when we embraced.

Coming Night, fast riding when all is gay,
Would seal this haven with darkness and soon
There'd be no escape for there'd be no moon
To guide us. We'd come back another day!
Slowly down the steep lane we made our way.
We did not bid adieu. We would return!
Days slowly passed. Deep did the memory burn!
Loud was the call to come for longer stay!

Once more that wooded hill stretched out its hand.
We went in sunshine and stayed until stars
Blinked smiling eyes 'neath Sunset's crimsoned bars
And crescent moon rode high to light the land
That our loves might converge divinely grand
To lift us heavenward, erase all scars,
Unite our very souls as long as stars
Do shine and we seek rest, Dear, hand in hand.

BLACK POOLS

Black pools
Of autumn rain
Reflecting the tall trees,
Have gathered into their far depths
One star.

SHEET-MIST

Sheets of mist are crawling—snowy drifters
From the valley up the mountain side.
Far off homes of men are buried under
Arctic plains that stretch out far and wide.
Vagrant wispy mist is flying eastward
Turning into winding sheets of gray.
Wildly clutching arms that seem to smother
Every vital thing which comes their way.
Primal waves engulf—and clammy fingers
Coil and grip. The sky above us falls.
Shrouded ghosts come weaving darkest magic
Symphonies of dawn—are choked to drawls.
Sun—which lifts the curtain slowly upward!
Pines and cedars—chaparral—and grass
(Hung with jewels—flung as recompense,)
Merge in preludes.—Morning mists—that pass.

MUTED VOICES

An old man digging,—digging in his garden.
The hole grows deeper, until his knees are hidden.
Ashes and tin cans are dumped into the place,
Rotted leaves and dirt, more leaves and dirt.
His hands and face, his clothes are streaked with sweat
and mud.
He plants his seed and watches them grow,
Tiny green shoots, leaves, flower buds,—
Then lovely blossoms that sway and nod in the wind.
I speak to him,—he cannot hear my voice.
He bends lower—and talks to the flowers.

FRAGMENT

I, Lahee, teller of tales,
Sit and listen to your voice,
That is a jade flute
Giving out melodies of sound,
Clearer than the tone of blue water
Dripping on seed pearls of white sand.
You sigh—I hear the rustle of silk,
Embroidered with the silver thread
Of many moons.

Tonight when I go to the temple of the Green Twilight
To weave a tale for the Most High,
A wind will stir through the mango trees
And a fragrance, cool as moonlight
And sweet as lotus flowers,
Will blossom into sad little pearls of sound
Like the dripping of blue water,
On white sand.

DAY'S END

The sun, a red hibiscus,
Closed its petals;
Flying birds traced a pattern in the sky.
Across the lake
Black trees hammered the sunset's gold
Like figures on a Japanese vase.
A ripple passed over the water,
Night's breath trembled in the darkness
Like a sigh;
When the dream was shattered
By a wild bird's cry.

DUST

"Feet track dust into the house,"
Whispered the woman to herself
As she shuffled back and forth upon her threshold—
"Even the feet of friends—"
She stooped to brush a footprint
From her bare hall floor.

"I see it dancing in upon the sunbeams,"
She muttered, and closed the windows of her room. . .

"My neighbors' children are a grimy, noisy crew,"
She would grumble, as she drove them from her
lawn.

And so, immured, she passed her days
Within an old, dark house
That was crumbling into dust
As swiftly and inevitably as she.

FROM THE BRIDGE

The shadow of the bridge abides though ripples flow
Across the surface with the tides in amber glow;
The tawny waters of the stream are seen opaque,
But quivers play and shadows teem in curves that make
A changing pattern through it all.
Though waters rise or waters fall,
The shadow of the bridge abides
Beneath the changes of the tides.

RURALE

Last night a young new moon hung low
Behind the larch trees in the lane,
And my pained heart was stilled to hear
Your footsteps, which I thought were near;
The sounds were tricks of night, I know
You will not come this way again.

On other nights as calm and still,
You've come along this lane to me,
And held my trembling heart awhile—
The grace of you, your kiss, your smile,
Inclined me gladly to your will—
Why must I unremembered be?

Now I am penalized by fate,
And grief is my affinity,
Bound by unhappy circumstance
To suffer much, while you perchance,
In other lane, with other mate,
Express your dear divinity.

WAY SIDE SHRINES

Birthdays are way side shrines
That mark the stations of appointed years,
Still shelters, where the heart may kneel
And breathe its orisons, and feel
Renewed and rested and released from fears.

The mind in retrospect
Reviews Life's very complicated episode,
Unfolds each memoried yesterday;
Recalls the triumphs of the way,
And treasures friends encountered on the road.

And so from shrine to shrine
The lifting path leads out across the lea
Of promised years. Each day shall bring
Its own strength to the traveling;
Rejoice and know 'the best is yet to be'.

PEACE

The peace that we all covet
Whose hands are wrinkled and worn,
The most wanted thing in the world,
The kind that prophets speak of,
That comes from heaven above,
The purpose of all hope and effort,
Which passeth all understanding,
Comes to us merely in dreams.

MAIN STREET

Crowds of people pass me by—
Coming, going to and fro.
Always walking here and there,
Some are gay, some bowed with care.
No one knows just where they go
Walking along
Onward.

Some are wearing fancy clothes—
Others have on naught but rags.
Some are women, young and fair;
Strong young men, so debonair,
Some old men and wrinkled hags
Hobbling along
Slowly.

So I wonder where they go—
Pawns held in the hand of fate?
Main Street of a busy town;
People passing up and down;
Rich and poor, and small and great
Walking along
Main Street.

A TREE

I commune with you, O tree,
In God's reflected glory there,
The scars men have carved on your body
And to you, their secrets bear.
You stand the heat, the ice and furious storm,
But in time go back straight to your stately form.
You waft the sweetness of your foliage
To man, roaming or resting in the wood.
We find shelter beneath your loving arms
And look to God to make our souls as good.

HERO

She did not dream that he,
lying impatient in her womb,
would be someday
only a man of bronze
standing motionless in a park
with arms folded,
that birds would light upon his hair,
that lovers would pause behind him
to exchange futile promises,
that small boys
would make a target of his face
someday.

DESIGN

Knowing I may never find the hill
and the one lonely tree
that lies along the wind
and knows the tops of clouds,
I think the sky laughs and mourns a little,
knowing I shall sow many footsteps
searching.

AFTERNOON ON A HILL

Will the trees remember?
eucalyptus trees with warm frost
on their leaves,
defying the wind but trembling.
Will they remember
that you slept with open eyes
and called yourself a stone?
Will the trees remember
and brood over a halfpainted picture?
a wine bottle, the cork somewhere,
the hamper forgotten and footsteps
measuring the distance to the road
too swiftly and without joy.

EMPTINESS

There are still flowers—but I can know no fragrance.
There are still bright lights and dancing through the
 swift, sweet autumn hours.
These can never gladden me, for I can know no gaiety.
I—who count tears falling with the dying leaves of
 flowers.

There are still days—for going and returning.
There is still adventuring—but none of it is mine;
There is still flame, but I am past all burning.
There is still youth—I have forgotten time.

RATHER WOULD I—

Rather would I love came as it has come;
Raining from heaven for a month or two;
Knowing the fullest ecstasy of desire—
Being loved and left alone by you.
Rather the hand of pain around my heart
For years unending, than the placid fire
Of love that grows an inch or two a year
And endures forever, like a solemn tree.

ON AUTUMN TWILIGHT

On Autumn twilight; warm evenings I have known—
I think South Texas comes into her own.
The last years passing, are as a dark bird flown
From the present back to where it was before.

A Mexican sits at ease beside his door;
A naked child rolls laughing on the floor.
A burro walks with slowly tinkling bell
Back to his master and his log corral.
This is the life to me—
I know and love it well!

GRATITUDE

I was too old in love's account, and you
Too young with life's fresh curiosity;
I gave you more than any love's just due
To cherish, when you sought but to let free
The prisoned lust the world had yet denied:
I knew your passion was but fire of youth,
I knew your sweetly-murmured love-words lied,
But dared not face the future with the truth.
I knew not then how wisely I seemed blind,
How memories through agony would weave
The only threads of solace life could find
And cause me still with clinging hope believe
You may yet seek my pleading, grateful hands . . .
No soul that's scarred but loves the iron that brands.

GHOSTS

Imprisoned in my soul's deep, secret hiding-place,
I cherish wraiths of ne'er-forgotten happiness;
Dim, haunting ghosts that rise to walk the rutted road
My mind has journeyed in a ceaseless pilgrimage . . .
They tread not there the rocks our spleen has cut,
Nor feel the stinging ash our love has burned away . . .
Dry tears blot out the sight of eyes now blind to see
The pulse that beats, yet does not stir the temple's
throb,
Like to the silent rippling of the dried-up stream
That flowed from out our hearts with passion
stirred . . .
They linger in the closed-up door, forever sealed,
And wait the sound of vanished love they knew;
The hollow bodies in the dear-remembered room
In silence cry aloud to deaf, unheeding walls
No longer holding echo of once-spoken words . . .
Their only resting-place is buried in my soul,
Where rusting knives of agony will slowly pierce
The helpless, fleshless hearts until they beat no more.

THE DREAM THAT NEVER WAS

Somewhere on the highest star, the one from which the
dreams are sent,
the gods whose task and gift is loveliness were gathered
to plan for the dream that never was. All ineffability
was amassed into a heap before them, to be weighed
and sorted.

They said, "We'll carve it out of ecstasy, the dream
that never was,
and it shall be our splendid gift.

"Let the wordlessness of love's own content
be its utterance. Cull from every beauty the moment
of its birth, and press them all into the space
of a heartbeat. Drench the blended whole in moonlight.
Color it with dawn."

When the dream was finished the gods looked on
in mute breathlessness till one cried out,
"We cannot let it go, this dream that never was!"
And there was a quick echo of assent,
but one of the company did not speak, a kind goddess
mortal-born: In trembling secrecy she resolved
to break the edict, to steal the dream that never was,
and send it earthward. "Each century or so (she
planned)

I'll find a hidden casement, and release the dream that
never was
to dance along the ramparts of a mortal mind
for the pause of a breath, and then
restore it safely back again. The gods will never
know."

Last night from the hands of the goddess who was
kind
the dream that never was came careening down the
skies
and shot obliquely through a woman's sleep.
Last night I dreamed a glimpse of you.

DAWN

Lift up your heads, oh ye hills,
To greet the coming dawn.
A new born day approaches,
Riding on wings of song.
The tree tops tinted golden,
By sun's first morning rays,
The sky deep dyed in colors,
Proclaim the coming day.

Lift up your heads, oh ye hills,
To greet the coming dawn.
The night departed in silence,
Before the approach of morn.
And when you follow your own heart,
As daylight follows the dark.
No priceless pearls are needed,
To bring happiness to your heart.

THE MOON

The moon is big and round and bright,
And floats up in the air,
Like my new toy orange balloon
That I bought at the Fair.

What holds the moon up in the sky,
I wonder when I wake.
Where do you suppose the moon would go,
If it's little string should break?

MY GARDEN FLOWERS

I'm sending you garden flowers,
That they may a truth unfold.
The red, of passionate beauty,
The yellow, jealousy bold.
The white, a purity symbol,
The blue, truth's petals entwined.
The pink, my choice of the blossoms,
Carries love's sweet message divine.

SHADOWS

Tonight I have seen many shadows . .
Some were knocked about by the wind
And careened drunkenly along the sidewalk;
Even the distant shadows on the Moon
Moved in uncertain course across her face,
As though they knew the way none too well.
There were shadows on a window blind,
Seeking, groping for each other.

I've watched shadows dance like elves
Reflecting moods of our gay selves;
Also I've seen shadows crawl
Like a ghost along a wall.
Seen them lag and mince and strut,
Seen them blur, then smoothly cut
The stillness of the night into
Shadows, gray and black and blue,
Shadows.

MUSINGS

Pearly pasts tremble
On the margin of my dreams,
Like sham ghosts
To haunt realities.

NIGHT

Night is bathing her ebony body in moonlight,
Flashes of scintillating silver
Play over her voluptuous form,
Making a glamorous Goddess of the Nocturnal hour.
Showers of stars shimmer
In homage to her dusky charms.
Ah, Night, a million illusive perfumes
Escape from your favored fingers,
And drug my dreams with avenues of Delight. . . .

FETTERED

Ah! Could I come to you
Across this chasm deep
That yawns, so steep, between our lives,
Through the interminable years,
I'd throw myself upon my knees,
And kiss your hands,
And wet them with my tears,
If I were free
To say, "I love you,"
And to know—that you love me.

Ah! Could I come to you
Across this chasm wide,
The memory of blighted years,
Of cherished hope that died,
The longing and the yearning
For that which could not be,
Should all be swept aside;
If I could say, "I love you,"
If I could know—
That you love me.

Yet, might I come to you
Across this chasm vast;
In written words of song
I could confess
My passion strong,
Though time and space
Conspire to thwart me
To the last,
And I'm not free
To say, "I love you,"
And may only guess
That you love me.

SLEET

The sleet that drives the wanderer home,
Is bending low my pine trees tall,
Their weight so great, I fear they moan
But bowed in silence, solemnly fall.

To see some straining near the ground,
Others broken, never to sway again
Soft southern winds blow 'round,
Hurts deeply, as in prayer helpless I remain.

So like majestic pines, some souls break,
When earthly burdens fall as sleet,
While others, twisted and bent, slowly make
The grade, to laugh again at life and defeat.

CAPE ELIZABETH

I have feasted tonight without meat,
And filled to the brim am I,
With a rocky coast, and waves that beat,
On a lighthouse signalling ships nearby.

Thus through the years that follow I find,
Pockets frayed and empty of means,
For bread to strengthen faint body and mind,
My soul will depart to these nourishing scenes.

I will feast and departing pay homage,
Seeking my fortune, the failures to cope,
With a heart heaped high with courage,
And a soul overflowing with hope.

HANDS—JUST HANDS

The world is full of hands
Just hands
Some work—some play all day
Those hands

Some weave silk in long strands
Deft hands
Some build the busy way
Strong hands

Some soothe the fevered brow
Cool hands
Some fight our bloody wars
Torn hands

Some guide the horse and plow
Brown hands
Some reach out to the stars
Tired hands

Some have much overcome
Firm hands
Some shut out misery
Kind hands

And so ad infinitum
More hands
Each writes a history
Of hands

Some put themselves in thine
My hands
Some clasp in love divine
Our hands

All point to God on high
Their hands
And reach to bring Him nigh
ALL HANDS!

SHOE-STRINGS

Up hill and down on the highway,
A poet-philosopher swings,
In his heart is the pulsing of music,
And of strange, unknowable things;
In his soul is the gleam of the artist,
In his hands he holds shoe-strings.

He roams in the town and the country,
A poet whose blithesome heart sings,
A man who must trudge for a pittance,
While his eager fancy takes wings;
A painter of words, ever throbbing,
Soul-tied by paltry shoe-strings.

The heart of the poet is dreaming
And lives in the presence of kings,
It soars into regions unchartered
And faint echoes to mortals it brings;
But today the poet is hungry,
Won't somebody buy his strings?

APRIL

April, the whimsey, has fluttered in,
A saucy, flirting queen;
She smiles; and sunshine floods the world,
She weeps, and showers are seen.

When gay, her fairies dance with joy
On trembling boughs of spring,
And when she frowns, as a queen may do,
Damp perfumes, like tears, they bring.

But the other night this young queen died,
At the close of a changeful day,
Yet dying, she left the earth all warm
For her baby—the month of May.

ASPIRATION

I trust that somehow, somewhen and somewhere,
In the spring-time's bloom or the summer's glow,
In the autumn's haze or the winter's snow,
I shall find my love, sought year after year.

In dreams I call and no voice replies,
Her sweet low voice that I knew of old,
And gain no glimpse of her tresses' gold,
No kindly glance of her soft brown eyes.

In vain I yearn for her form and face
Whose grace and beauty held my heart in thrall;
For pitiless death has hidden all
And the phantom years have left no trace.

I trust that her charms, long my life and pride,
In fancy will stay to solace and cheer,
Until somehow, somewhen and somewhere
We shall meet again, whatever betide.

When death shall come to me, soon or late,
To end the parting of her life from mine,
My soul will pray the All-Father benign
To unite us again at eternity's gate.

I trust yet that in some other sphere,
With selves transfigured, we'll live anew
Forever and ever, when dreams come true,
With never a parting someotherwhere.

FROTH ON THE MELTING-POT

Now let the children
Of the people dance. Now let
African and white,
Jew, Gentile, clean and unclean,
Dance. It is America.

The joy of living,
The strength of wide communion,
Be theirs forever.
Victors of Rome and Athens
Behold these young, rejoicing.

NO FLOWERS

No flowers when I die, except from those
Who have sincerely loved me. I shall know
If but one bloom, falling apart, shall throw
Petals of pride before the foot that goes,
All white and chastened, all unshod, at close
Of my brief hour, down the ordained way.
Make smooth my path to that enfolding gray
Twilight. Let no bright leaf or fragrant rose

Wither in that hot blast of fetid air
Which dies a-straining for elysian spots,
The lovely isles. Godspeed me with sweet care.
I shall feel, as hard cobbles, those roughened
thoughts
Of pomp and circumstance, as I go down
To my swift shallop to embark—alone.

STILL PLACES

Poetry should be read in still places,
Where trees are, and ivy, and ferns.
On September afternoons,
When the sun is like silver,
Shining through gold leaves,
In a park.

Poetry should be written in quiet spots,
Where the hum of the city is far,
Accenting the stillness;
Where the only life is that of wings in the sunshine
And the hidden life under the ivy.

Poetry should be written for toilers,
For those who live in the clamor and bustle
Of cities.
For those whose souls need rest and a vision,
And, needing those things,
Crave greenness—and sunlight—and trees.

LOST HOME

A little path goes twisting
Uphill among the firs.
In grass around the cabin
A wistful, lost wind stirs.

Black firs in sky of silver
Ring close about the place
When twilight comes in purple.
Then—I may muse a space

In woods that, shadow haunted,
Guard white anemones,
Till velvet night hides gently
Our house among the trees.

THE KEEPSAKE

This stone, its worth I cannot tell,
Set in this clutch of dull old gold,
But he, I shall remember well,
Gave it the day his love he told.

Oh, blue is heaven and blue the sea,
And blue this sapphire in my hand;
So high, so deep, so boundlessly,
My love answered every demand.

And now this stone—and memory
Are all relentless fate has left;
But none who know my constancy
Dare say, or think, I am bereft.

HOW I HAVE LOVED THEE

How I have loved thee none shall ever know,
Save God. How in His sight shall my love be?
Surely what came not of myself to me,
But out of boundless space was not for woe.
I stand alone at eventide, and lo!
From out the chords of heavenly harmony,
When sounds of day are hushed and night sets free
The music of the spheres, I know it so.
I know, dear heart, your love was sent to bless;
For all my higher self rose at your call.
Love is of God, while human loneliness
Kills, as lovely bloom blighted by pall
In drought. Sweetheart, my love, I thus confess.
Not I, but only God, could tell it all.

A REPROACH

You forgot
But I remembered.
And now my senses offer
Things you no longer proffer;
Yet in all my revelry
I can trace your devilry—
And you know I have no resistance
For such, though it end existence.

MY LOVE

All this
You told me—
“My love is like the wind,
Unceasing; sometimes hot—sometimes cold
Yet always my love.
My love is like the sea tide
Going in and out—in and out
Yet always there.
My love is like the sun and moon
One comes and then the other—
Yet both must always come.
My love is like my life—
Yours—as long as it is mine.”

A MEASURE OF LOVE

“Not I myself know all my love for thee.”
The stars—the round world and the measureless
distance
Hold for me but thee and me
Compass round my adoration
Of thee—All my life that I command
Awaits but your demand.

SPRING

As I gaze upon the cloud banks
My heart with rapture thrills.
I look at them and laugh . . .
And shout to the highest hills.

Spring is here . . . Spring is here!
Come, throw all care away . . .
Forget that you are rich, are poor . . .
Come out with me . . . and play.

SONG

As I wander in this city . . . alone . . . forlorn
 Within my heart a song is born;
A song of joy and mirth . . . and tears,
 A song of high hopes . . . and fears.

THE GLORY OF THE SEA

Behold the glory of the pulsing sea at twilight
When the sky and sea are one,
And lines of misty surf come marching into sight
From the land of setting sun.
Mighty throbbing from the mighty deep—
A soul ne'er done a-sobbing,
Grief too deep for sleep!
Lonely stretches into distance
Where vast power reaches down
And crushes out the life of sea and sky
Within her sable gown.

Oh, the changing beauty of the twilight sea,
So beautiful it smothers me!

MOON DREAM

I laughed in ecstasy of delight,
Gay as a sprite,
Watching a new moon's flight—
A slim white rainbow, pendant-pearled
To weight an arch of light!

I dreamed in a maize-gold sea,
Woody by an amber tide,
Led by a shimmering wisp of mist-lure
Flung from a full moon's side!

I wept, and sought to clasp
A faded dream
That shrank from appealing arms
Lifted hungrily!
For a waning moon dropped to the sea
And forgot to return—and kept—
The heart of me.

THE FOG

The fog—it came out of the sea;
The sky—it reached down to the sea.

And the misty veil of nowhere
Reached out and enveloped the mountains
And cloaked the harbors and the ships
In a coat of dull milky-white.

The fog—it rose up to the sky;
The sky—it reached down to the sea.
The sea and the sky were one.

FREEDOM

I envied all things I thought were free:
The clouds and the stars and the wind. . . .
I hungered to see—to flee
My armored existence; not to pretend,
But to be.

Certain that I was right,
I strained with all my might.
The chains loosened; they broke!
I cast off my yoke. . . .
I was free!

And now my freedom is but a chain round my neck,
While I toss from rock to rock like a withered wre.

PROSTRATE I LIE

Prostrate I lie
As evening draws nigh;
Darkness spreads its wings;
Gloomy shadows come stealing
Softly, and bedeck all things.
Then begins a silent whispering—
A brooding melody that sings
Your name—of you it sings!

SONG BESIDE THE SEA

I am here beside the sea again,
Recalling days of pleasure and pain

Pushing ten fretful fingers in the moist loam;
Watching young seagulls flirt with the shifting foam.

Brooding over words of love that never were said;
Puzzling why sundown at sea turns the sky so red.

Carving formless altars of longing in the cool sands;
Viewing nameless ships questing cargo from alien
lands.

Wondering Who gave this rolling expanse its vagrant
grace;

Hungering anew for the sight of a fair vanished
face

I'm beside the sea with trembling eye,
But where is the boy that once was I?

REQUIEM

Turn not the sweet earth over,
Let me sleep among the clover.

Where woodland whispers quicken love anew;
And ageless skylarks populate the blue,
Above flower gardens unknown to dew;
There would I oft in happy silence go,
And try to find where lazy rivers flow.

Where every lover greets his lass;
And mournful hours never come to pass,
Beside the fount where Spring holds fond mass;
There I'd lie teasing a leafy braid,
And hear no gardener ply his spade.

Turn not the sweet earth over,
Let me sleep among the clover.

THE MOUNTAIN

What a great sight is the mountain,
Standing stately, huge and still.
Yet all ages love and praise it;
Praise it, future ages will.

What if, like a lot of people,
It should feel it had to boast,
Lest perchance the passing public
Might not see its size and worth.

It would lose its former grandeur,
Men would not admire it then.
They would see alone its roughness;
Hope they'd not see it again.

Men of greatness are not boastful;
Self is not their chief delight,
But to praise good deeds of others
And to do their own work right.

If our deeds are good and honest,
If our work has been done well,
Like the mountain, men will see it.
We should leave to them to tell.

Sham and untruth are detected.
There's no way to hide them long.
He who tries to fool his fellows
Does himself an awful wrong.

If you're not with your condition
Satisfied as being right,
Find the reason for your failure,
If it takes some hours each night.

Keep your head upon your shoulders,
Sell yourself your way is right.
Set yourself a high ambition,
Then wade in prepared to fight.

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